The Canterbury Poets

COWPER

THE POETICAL WORKS

OF

WILLIAM COWPER.

With Prefatory Notice, Biographical and Critical.

BY

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Introductory Notice.

WILLIAM COWPER was born on the 26th of November 1731. His father, the Rev. John Cowper, D.D., was chaplain to King George II., and rector of Berkhampstead; and the parsonage-house of this little Hertfordshire town was the birthplace of the poet. His mother was a distinguished woman, of considerable amiability and power. Her maiden name was Anne Donne, and Dr. Johnson declared that this lady was descended from the several noble houses of West, Knollys, Carey, Bullen, Howard, and Mowbray; and so, by four different lines, from Henry III., King of England. The Doctor added, that "distinctions of this kind can shed no additional lustre on the memory of Cowper; yet genius, however exalted, disdains not, while it boasts not, the splendour of

ancestry; and royalty itself may be pleased, and perhaps benefited, by discovering its kindred to such piety, such purity, and such talents as his." Cowper had the misfortune to lose his mother when he was only six years old, yet so deep and lasting was her influence upon his character and mind, that nearly fifty years after her death he said, "Not a week passes in which I do not think of her—such was the impression her tenderness made upon me, though the opportunity she had for showing it was so short." The beautiful and pathetic poem written on the receipt of his mother's picture reveals the reverence which he felt for her. This loss was the more to be deplored on Cowper's account, because from his infancy he was a delicate child, with the tendency to melancholy which was afterwards so painfully developed. He was sent, immediately after his mother's death, to a school kept by Dr. Pitman, at Market Street, in Hertfordshire. The school was large, and he suffered many things in it, especially at the hands of a young bully about fifteen years old, who treated the weak child with more than the usual school-boy barbarity. Cowper always remembered the fear with which this young tyrant inspired him, and said that he was afraid to lift his eyes upon him higher than his knees, and knew him better by his shoe-buckles than by any

other part of his dress. The cruelty of this boy was eventually discovered, and he was expelled from the school, where Cowper himself spent only two years. He was removed because he was threatened with blindness, specks having appeared on both eyes; and the next two years were passed in the house of an eminent oculist, where he was so far cured that he was able at ten years old to be sent to Westminster School. At fourteen he had an attack of the small-pox, which he said proved the best oculist, for after it had passed off, the specks in his eyes were found to have gone with it. He was not unhappy at Westminster School, although in after-life, when he wrote his scathing censure of public schools, he doubtless recalled some trials that he had endured there. He held a high place among the boys as an expert at cricket and football; and his poems are proofs that he had pleasant associations connected with his boyhood:—

> "Be it a weakness, it deserves some praise,
> We love the play-place of our early days."

It is true that with the morbid self-reproach which did much to rob his manhood of strength and beauty, he afterward described himself as a wicked boy, without any sentiments of contrition, and as a great adept in "the infernal art of lying; but

those who were his school-fellows and teachers described him as a gentle, inoffensive boy, with a mild and amiable temper, far more kindly disposed and good than the average school-boy. He greatly lamented his own lack of religion, and also the absence of religious teaching in the school, although he bore testimony to the pains which Dr. Nichols took to prepare the boys for confirmation. He had some school-mates who became notable men afterward; and at school he first exhibited his poetic tendency:—

> "At Westminster, where little poets strive
> To set a distich upon six and five,
> Where discipline helps opening buds of sense,
> And makes his pupils proud with silver pence,
> I was a poet too."

Cowper remained at Westminster until he was seventeen years old; he then spent nine months at home, and was next sent to acquire the practice of the law with an attorney. That his master did not teach him religion as well as law was one of his causes of complaint in after years, when he complained of everything. He was articled to Mr. Chapman for three years, and his fellow-clerk was the young man who afterwards became Lord Chancellor Thurlow, and was ever the poet's friend. Cowper said of this time—"I did actually

live three years with Mr. Chapman, a solicitor—that is to say, I slept three years at his house; but I lived—that is to say, I spent—my days in Southampton Row" (with an aunt). "There was I and the future Lord Chancellor constantly employed, from morning to night, in giggling and making giggle, instead of studying the law." It has been supposed by some that the melancholy of which he was later the subject was promoted by his study of the law; but this confession by the poet himself does not support the idea. He used to declare that he was unfitted for the law; but he also said—"What nature expressly designed me for I have never been able to conjecture, I seem to myself so universally disqualified for the common and customary occupations and amusements of mankind."

When he left the solicitor's office, he had attained his majority, and he took chambers in the Middle Temple in 1752; and it was then, while living alone, that the malady which overshadowed so much of his life was developed. In 1754 he was called to the bar; but Southey says—"That he had taken no pains to qualify himself for his profession is certain, and it is probable that he had as little intention to pursue it, resting in indolent reliance upon his patrimonial means, and in the likely expectation that some official appointment would be found for

him in good time." In 1756 his father died. Three years later he purchased chambers in the Inner Temple, for which he gave two hundred and fifty pounds. Soon after removing to them he was made a Commissioner of Bankrupts. At this time love occupied him more than law, for his affections were given to and returned by one of his cousins, Theodora Jane, the daughter of Mr. Ashley Cowper. The lady's father refused to sanction the engagement, on account of the relationship which existed between them. All intercourse was at once broken off; and though both were disappointed, Theodora appears to have been the greater sufferer of the two. Cowper put his feelings into verse, which he sent to Theodora's sister, Lady Hesketh, and from which it is evident that he counted the trouble, though great, not the greatest of his life. At this time he was a member of "The Nonsense Club," and had for his friends Bonnell, Thornton, Colman, Lloyd, and Joseph Hill: he also had a great admiration for Charles Churchill and his poetry.

He was at this time not earning money, and began to have some anxiety in regard to his condition when the small patrimony that he had should have been spent. He expressed a hope, one day when talking to a friend, that if the clerk of the journals of the House of Lords should die, the appointment might be secured to him by his

kinsman, Major Cowper. The clerk was probably ill at this time, and shortly afterward he did die. But Major Cowper had also an office of greater value at his disposal—namely, that of reading clerk and clerk of the committees—which had become vacant by resignation. Nothing but Cowper's own sad forebodings and melancholy stood in the way of his success. He thus related what occurred between him and his kinsman :—"He called me out of my chamber, and having invited me to take a turn with him in the garden, there made me an offer of the most profitable places, intending the other for his friend Mr. Arnold. Dazzled by so splendid a proposal, and not immediately reflecting upon my incapacity to execute a business of so public a nature, I at once accepted it; but at the same time (such was the will of Him whose hand was in the whole matter) seemed to receive a dagger in my heart."

After a week of perplexity, Cowper resigned the appointment, asking that it might be made in favour of Mr. Arnold, and that he might have the less lucrative position of the clerk of the journals. He was told that he would probably have to pass an examination at the bar of the House, and the prospect of this so alarmed him, that his health broke down altogether. He went to Margate for change and relaxation, and somewhat recovered his spirits.

But when he had returned to town, and was required to attend the office and prepare for the examination, his madness all came back upon him, and he made several attempts to commit suicide rather than endure the ordeal. On the night before he was to appear at the bar of the House, he nearly succeeded in his efforts; and when the last had failed, and he sent to his kinsman to tell him what he had done, he said, "My dear Mr. Cowper, you terrify me! To be sure you cannot hold the office at this rate." It was evident that the poet was seriously ill, and the physician was sent for, while all thought of his holding a parliamentary office was abandoned. Then followed a terrible time of darkness and pain, from the sense of sin and the expectation of punishment. He read religious books, and held conversation with religious people, but all to no purpose; he could find no comfort, but the gloom that oppressed him became yet more impenetrable. It was then that he wrote the terrible poem commencing—

> "Hatred and vengeance—my eternal portion
> Scarce can endure delay of execution—
> Wait with impatient readiness to seize my
> Soul in a moment."

The friends of Cowper felt that it was absolutely necessary to place him under restraint, and he was taken to a private lunatic asylum kept by Dr.

Colton at St. Albans. Dr. Colton was a Christian and a man of letters; and so tenderly and wisely did he deal with his patient, that Cowper got much better in course of time, and was able to leave the asylum. In the calm that followed the fever through which he had passed, he wrote the beautiful hymns beginning—

"How blest Thy creature is, O God,
When, with a single eye,
He views the lustre of Thy word,
The day-spring from on high—

and—

"Far from the world, O Lord, I flee,
From strife and tumult far;
From scenes where Satan wages still
His most successful war."

A great peace had now settled down upon him; but it was still felt that it would be dangerous to subject him to any mental strain, and accordingly lodgings were procured for him at Huntingdon. He had spent more than eighteen months at St. Albans, "partly in bondage," he wrote "and partly in the liberty wherewith Christ had made me free." At Huntingdon he at once commenced again to correspond with his friends, notably with his cousin, Lady Hesketh, and his friend Hill. The letters of this time were most beautiful, poetic, humorous, and altogether delightful reading—indeed, William

Cowper's letters are among the most finished productions of his genius.

It was during his life at Huntingdon that he found some of his best friends. He announced to Lady Hesketh the fact that he had made acquaintance "with the race of the Unwins, consisting of father and mother, and son and daughter—the most comfortable and social folks you ever knew. The father is a clergyman, and the son is designed for orders. The design, however, is quite his own, proceeding merely from his being, and having always been, sincere in his belief and love of the gospel." Soon after, in the first place from motives of economy, he went to reside with the Unwins, and what this was to him, even from the beginning, may be seen from the following extract:—"I here found a place of rest, prepared for me by God's own hand, where He has given me abundant means of furtherance in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ, both by the study of His Word and communion with His dear disciples. May nothing but death interrupt it." He was a little perplexed at this time, because his expenditure had outrun his income, and he was on the verge of bankruptcy; but his friends generously came forward and made up the deficit. He thus described his life with the Unwins:—"We breakfast commonly between eight and nine; till eleven, we read either the Scripture

or the sermons of some faithful preacher ; at eleven we attend divine service, which is here performed twice a-day ; and from twelve to three we separate and amuse ourselves as we please. During that interval I either read in my own apartment, or walk, or ride, or work in the garden." The rest of the day was divided between walking and holding religious services and conversations. At this time Cowper ceased writing to Lady Hesketh, who did not altogether appear to sympathise with his religious ideas and practices, believing, no doubt, that it was not good for her cousin to be so constantly dwelling on this theme ; and he therefore poured out his thoughts to another cousin, the wife of Colonel Cowper.

The happy home at Huntingdon was broken up in consequence of the death of the head of the family. Mr. Unwin was riding to church on one Sunday morning, when he was thrown from his horse, and received injuries from which, a few days later, he died. It was now necessary for Mrs. Unwin to remove, and Mr. Newton of Olney, with whom they were slightly acquainted, was asked to look out a place for them. They subsequently removed to Olney, the sole reason being that by living there they would be under the pastoral care of Newton. This remarkable man and Cowper soon became close friends ; they were seldom apart

for many hours together, and the poet assisted the preacher by visiting the sick and dying, and leading prayer-meetings, etc. The excitement of this could not have been good for Cowper, who had many attacks of nervous agitation in consequence; but he declared that he "had entered upon a course of decided Christian happiness." Lady Hesketh especially was afraid of the result. "Mr. Newton is an excellent man, I make no doubt," said she, "and to a strong-minded man like himself might have been of great use; but to such a tender mind, and to such a wounded yet lively imagination as our cousin's, I am persuaded that eternal praying and preaching were too much." In 1770 Cowper lost his brother, the Rev. John Cowper, under circumstances which made a deep impression upon him. Soon after this he was engaged with Mr. Newton in producing a volume called *The Olney Hymns*. To read those of our poet is to see that the happy peace of mind which he had been enjoying was passing away, for sorrow and doubt are in such verses as these—

"Where is the blessedness I knew
When first I saw the Lord?"

or,

"My former hopes are fled,
My terror now begins."

Gradually the malady from which he had previously suffered returned, and in January 1773 Cowper had become decidedly insane. He was then unwilling to enter Mr. Newton's house, but having been persuaded to stay one night, he refused altogether to leave. Mrs. Unwin was his unwearied nurse and attendant by day and night, unmindful of her own health or the remarks of the uncharitable ; and with great gentleness and skill she ministered to her diseased friend. Mr. Newton, too, was most kind and patient, though, when weeks were prolonged into months, and Cowper still persisted in staying, the means of the good minister were considerably burdened. After remaining more than a year, Cowper decided to leave as suddenly as he had resolved to stay. For some time after, his terrible illness continued to oppress him ; but then he got sufficiently better to take an interest in life, and especially in some leverets that grew up under his care, and which he immortalised in Latin and in English, in prose and in verse.

Mr. Newton was at length removed to London, and it was then that Mrs. Unwin succeeded in persuading Cowper to attempt some work of more consequence than any which he had at present produced. She suggested "The Progress of Error," and as it gave him the opportunity for the exercise

of his powers of satire, he found in it a considerable amount of pleasure. This was soon followed by "Truth," "Table Talk," and "Expostulation," the four poems containing about two thousand five hundred lines, and these, with a few select small pieces, were enough to make a book. Mr. Newton undertook to find a publisher, who was forthcoming in the person of Joseph Johnson, of St. Paul's Churchyard.

Cowper found the waiting for the appearance of his book very long, but the tedium was relieved by an acquaintance that he then made. He observed two ladies in a shop, and very much liking the appearance of one, he requested Mrs. Unwin to invite her and her friend to tea. Lady Austin, the widow of a baronet, was one, and the other was her sister, Mrs. Jones, the wife of a clergyman. It was strange that so shy a man should make such a request; but the invitation was accepted, and Cowper, whose shyness returned, had yet to compel himself to talk to Lady Austin. But he was so delighted with her that he felt for her soon the most profound regard, and the vivacity and sprightliness of the lady became more to him than medicine, notwithstanding that they soon had a quarrel, and were reconciled. In a letter to Mr. Unwin, he said—"From a scene of the most uninterrupted retirement we have passed at once

into a state of constant engagement. Not that our society is much multiplied: the addition of an individual has made all this difference. Lady Austin and we pass our days alternately at each other's *chateau*. In the morning I walk with one or other of the ladies, and in the afternoon wind thread. Thus did Hercules, and thus, probably, did Samson, and thus do I; and were both those heroes living, I should not fear to challenge them to a trial of skill in that business, or doubt to beat them both." It was Lady Austin who related to Cowper the story of John Gilpin, which had been told to her in her childhood, and which amused the poet, as it has since done thousands of his readers. It was on one occasion, when his melancholy was returning, that she related the history, and he told her next morning that he had been kept awake the greater part of the night by thinking and laughing at it, and that he had turned it into a ballad. The ballad was sent to Mr. Unwin, and subsequently found its way into a print called the *Public Advertiser*. It was to Lady Austin that Cowper was indebted for the ideas of several of his poems. His dirge for the *Royal George* was written to suit an air which she often played on the harpsichord. A very different piece, almost matching "John Gilpin" in its playfulness, was also suggested by an incident in which Lady Austin

was one of the actors—"The Distressed Travellers, or Labour in Vain." But, best of all, Lady Austin it was who induced Cowper to try his powers in blank verse. She urged him so often that at last he said he would if she gave him the subject. She replied, "Oh, you can never be in want of a subject; you can write upon anything—write upon this sofa." He at once decided that he would do so, and *The Task* was commenced in the summer of 1783. But it was *The Task*, according to Cowper's own words, that brought the friendship between the three—Lady Austin, Mrs. Unwin, and the poet—to a close. Some biographers have endeavoured to suggest that the two women were jealous of each other—that Mrs. Unwin had wished to marry the poet, and Lady Austin wanted to marry him herself; but there is no proof whatever of this—the proof, indeed, is altogether to the contrary. Cowper found that the friendly attention he paid took more time than he could give. "I was forced to neglect *The Task* to attend upon the Muse who had inspired the subject;" besides which, Lady Austin's health was not good, and on that account it became desirable that she should leave Olney, which she did.

In the meantime Cowper's first volume had been read and duly criticised. His style was so new that it took the public some little time to make up its

mind respecting it. Some of the Reviews praised, and others regarded the poems doubtfully; but those whose judgment was the most to be depended upon were the most delighted. The utter absence of the sentimentalism which was then the rage was regarded by some as the absence of all poetry; but others felt that a new era had commenced, and that Cowper was destined to exert no inconsiderable influence upon the literature of the time. The first volume did not contain the greatest proofs of his genius: there is frequently more rhetoric than poetry in "Table Talk" and the "Progress of Error:" and "Truth," though it contains many fine lines, has much in it that is commonplace. The poet's mind grew stronger as he proceeded. "Expostulation," "Hope," and "Charity," though strongly tinged with the religious impressions made upon him by his intercourse with Mr. Newton, are as good to read in our day as when they were written more than a hundred years ago; nor has the satire lost its keen edge even yet. "Retirement" exhibits greater genius than the others of the series. In it Cowper's own taste found expression, for he delighted

> "To mark the matchless workings of the Power
> That shuts within the seed the future flower,
> Sends Nature forth, the daughter of the skies,
> To dance on earth and charm all human eyes."

Montgomery considered the figure in the last line "one of the most glorious ever struck out by a poet in his brightest moments," and unquestionably it is poetry of an exceedingly high order.

But while the world was talking of this, Cowper was producing a poem of much greater merit than any in his first volume. On the 3rd of August 1783, he wrote—"'The Sofa' is ended, but not finished—a paradox which your natural acumen, sharpened by habits of logical attention, will enable you to reconcile in a moment. Do not imagine, however, that I lounge over it; on the contrary, I find it severe exercise to mould and fashion it to my mind." The entire poem was transcribed in the autumn of 1784, and sent to Mr. Unwin for his perusal, he being at the same time requested to find a publisher for it. With his usual sensitiveness Cowper objected to have his book passed from publisher to publisher, or accepted by any one unwillingly; but his anxiety on that score was of short duration, for Johnson, to whom it was first offered, on account of his having published the previous volume, at once accepted the second.

It is on "The Task" that the fame of the poet chiefly hangs, for it is incomparably the greatest work of his life. It was written when his powers were fully matured, and when in himself he was more quiet and happy than on other occasions.

There is less acrimony and more benevolence than in his first volume, and it is easy to discover that his satire is more polished and less bitter. The book was the more certain to succeed from the sincerity and integrity of the author. He said, in a letter to Mr. Unwin—"My descriptions are all from nature; not one of them is second-handed. My delineations of the heart are from my own experience; not one of them borrowed from books, or is in the least degree conjectural. In my numbers, which I varied as much as I could (for blank verse without variety of numbers is no better than bladder and string), I have imitated nobody." "The Task" consists of six books. The first is "The Sofa," because that was the title given to him by Lady Austin. But Cowper only devoted a few pages to it, and then turned away from it to describe the beauties of nature—

"For I have loved the rural walk through lanes;"

and it was the beautiful, quiet scenery of his native land that he loved to depict. Even London made its appeal to the heart of the poet:—

"Where has commerce such a mart,
So rich, so thronged, so drained, and so supplied,
As London—opulent, enlarged, and still
Increasing London? Babylon of old,
Not more the glory of the earth than she,
A more accomplished world's chief glory now."

But it is in the second book, "The Timepiece," that the poet takes his highest flight. Nothing finer of its kind has ever been written in the English language than the first half-dozen pages. His indignant remonstrance against slavery carried with it more strongly the feelings of the English people than many another voluminous book.

> "I would not have a slave to till my ground,
> To carry me, to fan me while I sleep,
> And tremble when I wake, for all the wealth
> That sinews bought and sold have ever earned."

His apostrophe—

> "England, with all thy faults, I love thee still"—

has deepened or awakened true patriotism in many hearts. And his satirical denunciation of frivolity in the pulpit has served for a lesson to the world ever since—

> "Behold the picture! Is it like? Like whom?
> The things that mount the rostrum with a skip,
> And then skip down again; pronounce a text;
> Cry hem! and reading what they never wrote,
> Just fifteen minutes huddle up their work,
> And with a well-bred whisper close the scene."

In the third book, "The Garden," Cowper described the happy domestic life he was then living

and especially attacked the philosophy of his day. Yet those who censure him would do so less unkindly if they did not fail to see that he only found fault with the philosophy that was godless. He exalted the simple pleasures of the country folk, whose

> "Groves were planted to console at noon
> The pensive wanderer in their shades."

But the most beautiful passage in the book is that in which Cowper described his own experience—

> "I was a stricken deer, that left the herd
> Long since. With many an arrow deep infixed
> My panting side was charged, when I withdrew
> To seek a tranquil death in distant shades.
> There was I found by One who had Himself
> Been hurt by th' archers. In His side He bore,
> And in His hands and feet, the cruel scars.
> With gentle force soliciting the darts,
> He drew them forth, and healed, and bade me live."

The remaining three books, "The Winter Evening," "The Winter Morning Walk," and "The Winter Walk at Noon," contain many passages that are "familiar in our mouths as household words," and will live in the heart and memory of the world as long as there are simple pleasures and pure souls to delight in them. Cowper wrote some time afterwards—"In the year when I wrote 'The Task'

(for it occupied me above a year), I was very often most supremely unhappy ; and am, under God, indebted in a good part to that work for not having made me worse." This work, indeed, had many happy results. It brought back to him the pleasure of Lady Hesketh's friendship, who wrote in the first instance to praise "John Gilpin," and who subsequently gave her kinsman the joy of her companionship, and delicately rendered pecuniary aid. About this time, too (1785-6), an anonymous friend sent him an annuity of fifty pounds ; so that in many respects his prospects grew brighter. He still lived with Mrs. Unwin ; but he had the advantage of a close friendship with Sir John and Lady Throckmorton, whom he humorously called Mr. and Mrs. Frog, and in whose park he walked while thinking out much of the poetry in the latter parts of "The Task." Lady Throckmorton subsequently rendered him valuable assistance by transcribing his poems for him.

In 1785 Cowper was engaged upon his translation of Homer, which he found "a most agreeable amusement." A still greater delight he felt in the presence of Lady Hesketh, who spent a considerable part of the summer of 1786 at Olney with her cousin and Mrs. Unwin—an arrangement greatly enjoyed by the trio. "Lady Hesketh," wrote Cowper, "by her affectionate behaviour, the cheer-

fulness of her conversation, and the constant sweetness of her temper, has cheered us both, and Mrs. Unwin not less than me."

In November 1786 Lady Hesketh returned to London, and Cowper and his faithful friend, Mary Unwin, removed to Weston, and there lived in a house belonging to Sir John Throckmorton. They had not been there long when a great sorrow befell him in the death of Mrs. Urwin's son, a dear friend and correspondent of Cowper. This was followed in the case of the poet by a return of his old malady, which remained with him on this occasion for six months. Still he had much to cheer him. In a letter to a friend in 1787 he wrote—"But I have at least been tickled with some douceurs of a very flattering nature by the post. A lady unknown addresses the 'best of men;' an unknown gentleman has read my 'inimitable poems,' and invites me to his seat in Hampshire; another incognito gives me hopes of a memorial in his garden; and a Welsh attorney sends me his verses to revise. If you find me a little vain hereafter, my friend, you must excuse it, in consideration of these powerful incentives." But what amused him most was the request of the parish clerk of All Saints', in Northampton, who asked him to write a poem to annex to a bill of mortality which he published every Christmas. Cowper acceded to his request, and wrote the

mortuary verses for the clerk some years in succession.

At this time the poet was not the melancholy man that some have supposed. Certainly dark clouds often rested upon him, but he had many bright seasons; and, judging from his letters, he was on the whole very happy. He had friends who loved him exceedingly, and though some were lost to him, others came. One of the chief of these was Hayley, his friend during the rest of his life, and his biographer afterwards. The two men were brought into communication with each other by a rather curious coincidence. Both were engaged on editions of Milton, and neither wished to rival the other. Hayley wrote a very cordial letter to his reputed competitor, and enclosed a sonnet expressing his admiration. He afterwards went to Weston, and greatly enjoyed his visit; and actually prevailed on Cowper in return to visit him at Eastham. Eastham is near Chichester, and not far from the Isle of Wight, and Cowper found the change a most delightful one. Mrs. Unwin accompanied him. This faithful friend had given the poet great anxiety, for, a few months previously, she had suffered from a paralytic stroke, and was still far from well. But Hayley did his best, by inviting other guests to meet them, and by other

means, to render the visit not only pleasant, but beneficial to his guests. Cowper afterwards said, "The year Ninety-two shall stand chronicled in my remembrance as the most melancholy that I have ever known, except the few weeks I spent at Eastham." On their return to Weston, he again became ill and melancholy; and his friend of so many years was evidently failing. The two comforted each other as best they could, but the evening of life was dark and gloomy. At this time Cowper used to imagine that he heard words distinctly addressed to him by some invisible being, and that madness or death was approaching fast. One of the last poems he wrote at Weston was addressed to Mrs. Unwin—

> "The twentieth year is well nigh past
> Since first our sky was overcast:
> Ah, would that this might be the last!
> My Mary."

Mary's health and mind were both at this time giving way, and Lady Hesketh went down to Weston to see what could be done. There is pathetic mention in Southey's biography of the last service Mrs. Unwin was able to render her friend. For six days he had sat still and silent as death, refusing to move from his chair, and almost declining food. Nothing roused him, until

Mrs. Unwin told him that she was ill, and asked him to take her out for a walk, which he did. The poet's cousin was anxious to try the effect of a complete change, and in 1795 he and Mrs. Unwin were taken to Norfolk. Before leaving Weston he wrote on a panel of the window-shutter in his bed-room the following couplet :—

> "Farewell, dear scenes, forever closed to me ;
> Oh, for what sorrows must I now exchange ye !"

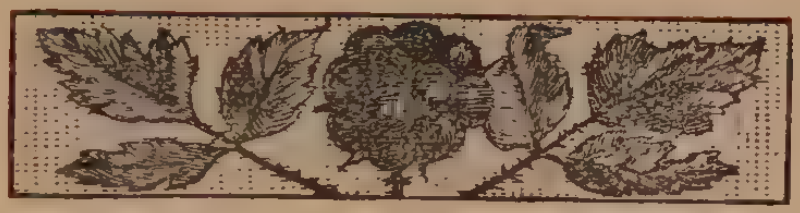
They went to North Toddenham, near East Dereham. They stayed also at Mundesley, and at Dereham Lodge. But Cowper's malady became worse and worse—he was filled with dreadful apprehensions ; and both he and his old friend were drawing near to the grave. Mrs. Unwin was the first to go. She expired without the slightest struggle on the 17th of December 1796. Cowper's friends were afraid of the result ; but the poet bore the trouble with greater calmness than was expected. His cousin, Mr. Johnson, had taken him to his own home, and lavished all possible care upon him, both there and at Mundesley, whither he was often conveyed for the benefit of the sea air. But he gradually sank into deeper weakness, and, alas ! into deeper gloom also. His last poem, and one of the most affecting and pathetic that was ever written, was "The Castaway."

In February 1800 dropsy set in, and though physicians did all that they could, he was, before the end of March, confined to his room. He died on April the 20th, and was buried in Dereham Church.

We are accustomed to speak of the life of Cowper as one of unutterable sadness. But it was not so. The terrible disease which afflicted him shrouded many months in gloom, but the greater number of his years were peaceful and happy. His writings had from the first a good influence upon the country. Perhaps his *Tirocinium; or, Review of Schools*, was unfair and unjust on the whole, but it accomplished a work of reformation. He may be said to have introduced a new era in literature. The style of his poetry was altogether different from that of his time, and it set an example, which, happily, has been followed, more or less, by the poets who have come after him. He espoused a good cause, and his name will ever be revered, while his genius is honoured, by those who, like him, recommend

> "The cause of piety, and sacred truth,
> And virtue, and those scenes which God ordained
> Should best secure them and promote them most."

EVA HOPE.



Poetical Works of Cowper.

VERSES WRITTEN AT BATH, ON FINDING THE HEEL OF A SHOE, IN 1748.

FORTUNE! I thank thee: gentle Goddess, thanks!
Not that my Muse, tho' bashful, shall deny,
She would have thank'd thee rather, hadst thou cast
A treasure in her way; for neither meed
Of early breakfast, to dispel the fumes,
And bowel-raking pains of emptiness,
Nor noontide feast, nor ev'ning's cool repast,
Hopes she from this—presumptuous, tho', perhaps,
The cobbler, leather-carving artist! might.
Nathless she thanks thee, and accepts thy boon,
Whatever; not as erst the fabled cock,
Vainglorious fool! unknowing what he found,
Spurn'd the rich gem thou gav'st him. Wherefore, ah!
Why not on me that favour (worthier sure!)
Conferr'dst thou, Goddess! Thou art blind, thou say'st:
Enough!—thy blindness shall excuse the deed.

Nor does my Muse no benefit exhale
From this thy scant indulgence !—even here,
Hints, worthy sage philosophy, are found ;
Illustrious hints, to moralise my song !
This pond'rous heel of perforated hide
Compact, with pegs indented, many a row,
Haply (for such its massy form bespeaks),
The weighty tread of some rude peasant clown
Upbore : on this supported oft, he stretch'd,
With uncouth strides, along the furrow'd glebe,
Flatt'ning the stubborn clod, till cruel time
(What will not cruel time ?), or a wry step,
Sever'd the strict cohesion ; when, alas !
He, who could erst, with even, equal pace,
Pursue his destin'd way with symmetry,
And some proportion form'd, now, on one side,
Curtail'd and maim'd, the sport of vagrant boys,
Cursing his frail supporter, treacherous prop !
With toilsome steps, and difficult, moves on :
Thus fares it oft with other than the feet
Of humble villager—the statesman thus,
Up the steep road, where proud ambition leads,
Aspiring, first uninterrupted winds
His prosp'rous way ; nor fears miscarriage foul,
While policy prevails, and friends prove true ;
But that support soon failing, by him left,
On whom he most depended, basely left,
Betray'd, deserted ; from his airy height
Headlong he falls ; and thro' the rest of life,
Drags the dull load of disappointment on.

AN ODE.

ON READING SIR CHARLES GRANDISON, IN 1753.

SAY, ye apostate and profane,
Wretches who blush not to disdain
Allegiance to your God,
Did e'er your idly-wasted love
Of virtue for her sake remove,
And lift you from the crowd?

Would you the race of glory run,
Know, the devout, and they alone,
Are equal to the task:
The labours of the illustrious course
Far other than the unaided force
Of human vigour ask,

To arm against repeated ill
The patient heart, too brave to feel
The tortures of despair;
Nor safer yet high-crested Pride,
When wealth flows in with every tide
To gain admittance there.

To rescue from the tyrant's sword
The oppressed;—unseen and unimplored,
To cheer the face of woe;
From lawless insult to defend
An orphan's right, a fallen friend,
And a forgiven foe;

These, these distinguish from the crowd,
And these alone, the great and good
The guardians of mankind;

Whose bosoms with these virtues heave,
Oh, with what matchless speed they leave
The multitude behind!

Then ask ye, from what cause on earth
Virtues like these derive their birth?
Derived from Heaven alone,
Full on that favoured breast they shine,
Where faith and resignation join
To call the blessing down.

Such is that heart;—but while the Muse
Thy theme, O Richardson, pursues,
Her feebler spirits faint;
She cannot reach, and would not wrong,
That subject for an angel's song,
The hero, and the saint!

ADDRESSED TO MISS MACARTNEY,

ON READING THE PRAYER FOR INDIFFERENCE. 1762.

AND dwells there in a female heart,
By bounteous Heav'n design'd
The choicest raptures to impart,
To feel the most refined—

Dwells there a wish in such a breast
Its nature to forego,
To smother in ignoble rest
At once both bliss and woe!

Far be the thought, and far the strain,
Which breathes the low desire,
How sweet soe'er the verse complain,
Tho' Phœbus string the lyre.

Come then, fair maid (in nature wise)
Who, knowing them, can tell
From gen'rous sympathy what joys
The glowing bosom swell.

In justice to the various pow'rs
Of pleasing, which you share,
Join me, amid your silent hours,
To form the better pray'r.

"Oh! if my Sov'reign Author please,
Far be it from my fate,
To live, unblest, in torpid ease,
And slumber on in state.

"What tho' in scaly armour drest,
Indifference may repel
The shafts of woe—in such a breast
No joy can ever dwell.

"'Tis woven in the world's great plan,
And fix'd by Heav'n's decree,
That all the true delights of man
Should spring from *Sympathy.*

"Peace to the phlegm of sullen elves.
Who, if from labour eased,
Extend no care beyond themselves,
Unpleasing and unpleased.

"Let no low thought suggest the pray'r ;
Oh ! grant, kind Heaven, to me,
Long as I draw ethereal air
Sweet Sensibility.

"Still may my melting bosom cleave
To suff'rings not my own,
And still the sigh responsive heave,
Where'er is heard a groan.

"So pity shall take Virtue's part,
Her natural ally,
And fashioning my soften'd heart,
Prepare it for the sky."

This artless vow may Heav'n receive
And you, fond maid, approve ;
So may your guiding angel give
Whate'er you wish or love.

So may the rosy-finger'd hours
Lead on the various year,
And ev'ry joy, which now is yours,
Extend a larger sphere.

And suns to come, as round they wheel,
Your golden moments bless,
With all a tender heart can feel,
Or lively fancy guess.

TABLE TALK.

A. YOU told me, I remember, glory built
On selfish principles, is shame and guilt.
The deeds that men admire as half divine,
Stark naught, because corrupt in their design.
Strange doctrine this! that without scruple tears
The laurel that the very lightning spares,
Brings down the warrior's trophy to the dust,
And eats into his bloody sword like rust.

B. I grant, that men continuing what they are,
Fierce, avaricious, proud, there must be war,
And never meant the rule should be applied
To him that fights with justice on his side.
And when recording history displays
Feats of renown, though wrought in ancient days,
Tells of a few stout hearts that fought and died
Where duty placed them, at their country's side,
The man that is not moved with what he reads,
That takes not fire at their heroic deeds,
Unworthy of the blessings of the brave,
Is base in kind, and born to be a slave.

But let eternal infamy pursue
The wretch to nought but his ambition true,
Who for the sake of filling with one blast
The post-horns of all Europe, lays her waste.

A. 'Tis your belief the world was made for man,
Kings do but reason on the selfsame plan,
Maintaining yours, you cannot their's condemn,
Who think, or seem to think, man made for them.

B. Seldom, alas! the power of logic reigns
With much sufficiency in royal brains.
Such reasoning falls like an inverted cone,
Wanting its proper base to stand upon.

Man made for kings ! those optics are but dim
That tell you so—say rather, they for him.
Oh ! bright occasions of dispensing good,
How seldom used, how little understood !
To pour in virtue's lap her just reward,
Keep vice restrain'd behind a double guard ;
To quell the faction that affronts the throne,
By silent magnanimity alone ;
To nurse with tender care the thriving arts,
Watch every beam philosophy imparts ;
To give religion her unbridled scope,
Nor judge by statute a believer's hope ;
With close fidelity and love unfeign'd,
To keep the matrimonial bond unstain'd ;
Coveteous only of a virtuous praise,
His life a lesson to the land he sways ;
To touch the sword with conscientious awe,
Nor draw it but when duty bids him draw,
To sheath it in the peace-restoring close,
With joy, beyond what victory bestows—
Blest country ! where these kingly glories shine,
Blest England ! if this happiness be thine.

A. Your smooth eulogium, to one crown address'd,
Seems to imply a censure on the rest.
Kings then at last have but the lot of all,
By their own conduct they must stand or fall.

B. True. While they live, the courtly laureate pays
His quit-rent ode, his pepper-corn of praise,
And many a dunce whose fingers itch to write,
Adds, as he can, his tributary mite ;
A subject's faults, a subject may proclaim,
A monarch's errors are forbidden game.
I pity kings whom worship waits upon
Obsequious, from the cradle to the throne,
Before whose infant eyes the flatt'rer bows,

And binds a wreath about their baby brows.
Whom education stiffens into state,
And death awakens from that dream too late.
If the gilt carriage and the pamper'd steed,
That wants no driving and disdains the lead ;
If guards, mechanically form'd in ranks,
Playing, at beat of drum, their martial pranks ;
Should'ring and standing as if struck to stone,
While condescending majesty looks on ;
If monarchy consist in such base things,
Sighing, I say again, I pity kings !

A. Thus men whose thoughts contemplative have dwelt,
On situations that they never felt,
Start up sagacious, cover'd with the dust
Of dreaming study and pedantic rust,
And prate and preach about what others prove,
As if the world and they were hand and glove.
Leave kingly backs to cope with kingly cares,
They have their weight to carry, subjects theirs ;
Poets, of all men, ever least regret
Increasing taxes and the nation's debt.
Could you contrive the payment, and rehearse
The mighty plan, oracular, in verse,
No bard, howe'er majestic, old or new,
Should claim my fixt attention more than you.
Or tell me if you can, what pow'r maintains
A Briton's scorn of arbitrary chains ?
That were a theme might animate the dead,
And move the lips of poets cast in lead.

B. The cause, tho' worth the search, may yet elude
Conjecture and remark, however shrewd.
They take, perhaps, a well-directed aim,
Who seek it in his climate and his frame.
Lib'ral in all things else, yet nature here

With stern severity deals out the year.
Winter invades the spring, and often pours
A chilling flood on summer's drooping flow'rs,
Unwelcome vapours quench autumnal beams,
Ungenial blasts attending, curl the streams,
The peasants urge their harvest, ply the fork
With double toil, and shiver at their work,
Thus with a rigour, for his good design'd,
She rears her fav'rite man of all mankind.
His form robust, and of elastic tone,
Proportion'd well, half muscle and half bone,
Supplies with warm activity and force
A mind well lodged, and masculine of course.
Hence liberty, sweet liberty inspires,
And keeps alive his fierce but noble fires.
Patient of constitutional control,
He bears it with meek manliness of soul,
But if authority grow wanton, woe
To him that treads upon his free-born toe.
One step beyond the bound'ry of the laws
Fires him at once in freedom's glorious cause.
O liberty! the pris'ner's pleasing dream,
The poet's muse, his passion and his theme,
Genius is thine, and thou art fancy's nurse,
Lost without thee th' ennobling pow'rs of verse,
Heroic song from thy free touch acquires
Its clearest tone, the rapture it inspires;
Place me where winter breathes its keenest air,
And I will sing if liberty be there;
And I will sing at liberty's dear feet,
In Afric's torrid clime, or India's fiercest heat.

A. Sing where you please, in such a cause I grant
An English Poet's privilege to rant,
But is not freedom, at least is not ours
Too apt to play the wanton with her pow'rs,

Grow freakish, and o'erleaping ev'ry mound,
Spread anarchy and terror all around?
B. Agreed. But would you sell or slay your horse
For bounding and curveting in his course;
Or, if, when ridden with a careless rein,
He break away, and seek the distant plain?
No. His high mettle under good control,
Gives him Olympic speed, and shoots him to the goal.
Incomparable gem! thy worth untold,
Cheap, though blood-bought, and thrown away when sold;
May no foes ravish thee, and no false friend
Betray thee, while professing to defend;
Prize it, ye ministers, ye monarchs spare,
Ye patriots guard it with a miser's care.
A. Patriots, alas! the few that have been found
Where most they flourish, upon English ground,
The country's need have scantily supplied,
And the last left the scene, when Chatham died.
B. Not so—the virtue still adorns our age,
Though the chief actor died upon the stage.
Such men are raised to station and command,
When Providence means mercy to a land.
He speaks, and they appear; to him they owe
Skill to direct, and strength to strike the blow,
To manage with address, to seize with power
The crisis of a dark decisive hour.
Poor England! thou art a devoted deer,
Beset with ev'ry ill but that of fear.
The nations hunt; all mark thee for a prey,
They swarm around thee, and thou stand'st at bay.
Undaunted still, though wearied and perplex'd,
Once Chatham saved thee, but who saves thee next?
Alas! the tide of pleasure sweeps along
All that should be the boast of British song.

'Tis not the wreath that once adorn'd the brow,
The prize of happier times will serve thee now.
Our ancestry, a gallant Christian race,
Patterns of ev'ry virtue, ev'ry grace,
Confess'd a God, they kneel'd before they fought,
And praised Him in the victories He wrought.
Now from the dust of ancient days bring forth
Their sober zeal, integrity, and worth ;
Courage, ungraced by these, affronts the skies,
Is but the fire without the sacrifice.
The stream that feeds the well-spring of the heart
Not more invigorates life's noblest part,
Than virtue quickens with a warmth divine,
The pow'rs that sin has brought to a decline.

TRUTH.

Pensantur trutinâ. **HOR. Lib. ii. Ep. i.**

MAN, on the dubious waves of error toss'd,
His ship half founder'd and his compass lost,
Sees, far as human optics may command,
A sleeping fog, and fancies it dry land :
Spreads all his canvas, ev'ry sinew plies,
Pants for it, aims at it, enters it, and dies.
Then farewell all self-satisfying schemes,
His well-built systems, philosophic dreams,
Deceitful views of future bliss, farewell !
He reads his sentence at the flames of hell.
Oh, how unlike the complex works of man,
Heaven's easy, artless, unencumber'd plan !
No meretricious graces to beguile,
No clust'ring ornaments to clog the pile,

From ostentation as from weakness free,
It stands like the cerulean arch we see,
Majestic in its own simplicity.
Inscribed above the portal, from afar
Conspicuous as the brightness of a star,
Legible only by the light they give,
Stand the soul-quick'ning words—BELIEVE AND LIVE.
Too many, shock'd at what should charm them most,
Despise the plain direction, and are lost.
Who judged the Pharisee? What odious cause
Exposed him to the vengeance of the laws?
Had he seduced a virgin, wrong'd a friend,
Or stabb'd a man to serve some private end?
Was blasphemy his sin? Or did he stray
From the strict duties of the sacred day?
Sit long and late at the carousing board?
(Such were the sins with which he charged his Lord.)
No—the man's morals were exact, what then?
'Twas his ambition to be seen of men:
His virtues were his pride; and that one vice
Made all his virtues gewgaws of no price;
He wore them as fine trappings for a show,
A praying, synagogue-frequenting beau.
The self-applauding bird, the peacock see—
Mark what a sumptuous Pharisee is he!
Meridian sunbeams tempt him to unfold
His radiant glories, azure, green, and gold;
He treads as if, some solemn music near,
His measured step were govern'd by his ear,
And seems to say, Ye meaner fowl, give place;
I am all splendour, dignity, and grace.
Turn eastward now, and fancy shall apply,
To your weak sight her telescopic eye.
The Brahmin kindles on his own bare head
The sacred fire, self-torturing his trade,

His voluntary pains, severe and long,
Would give a barb'rous air to British song,
Nor grand inquisitor could worse invent,
Than he contrives to suffer, well content.
  But why before us Protestants produce
An Indian mystic, or a French recluse?
Their sin is plain, but what have we to fear,
Reform'd and well instructed? You shall hear.
  Yon ancient prude, whose wither'd features show
She might be young some forty years ago,
Her elbows pinion'd close upon her hips,
Her head erect, her fan upon her lips,
Her eyebrows arch'd, her eyes both gone astray
To watch yon am'rous couple in their play,
With bony and unkerchief'd neck defies
The rude inclemency of wintry skies,
And sails with lappet-head and mincing airs,
Duly at clink of bell, to morning pray'rs.
To thrift and parsimony much inclined,
She yet allows herself that boy behind;
The shiv'ring urchin, bending as he goes,
With slipshod heels, and dewdrop at his nose,
His predecessor's coat advanced to wear,
Which future pages are yet doom'd to share,
Carries her Bible tuck'd beneath his arm,
And hides his hands to keep his fingers warm.
Of temper as envenom'd as an asp,
Censorious, and her every word a wasp,
In faithful mem'ry she records the crimes
Or real, or fictitious, of the times,
Laughs at the reputations she has torn,
And holds them dangling at arm's length in scorn.
  Such are the fruits of sanctimonious pride,
Of malice fed while flesh is mortified.
Take, Madam, the reward of all your pray'rs,

Where hermits and where Brahmins meet with theirs.
Your portion is with them ; nay, never frown,
But, if you please, some fathoms lower down.
  Man's obligations infinite, of course
His life should prove that he perceives their force,
His utmost he can render is but small,
The principle and motive all in all.
You have two servants—Tom, an arch, sly rogue,
From top to toe the Geta now in vogue ;
Genteel in figure, easy in address,
Moves without noise, and swift as an express,
Reports a message with a pleasing grace,
Expert in all the duties of his place :
Say, on what hinge does his obedience move ?
Has he a world of gratitude and love?
No, not a spark—'tis all mere sharper's play ;
He likes your house, your housemaid, and your pay ;
Reduce his wages, or get rid of her,
Tom quits you with, Your most obedient, Sir—
  The dinner served, Charles takes his usual stand,
Watches your eye, anticipates command,
Sighs if perhaps your appetite should fail,
And, if he but suspects a frown, turns pale ;
Consults all day your int'rest and your ease,
Richly rewarded if he can but please,
And proud to make his firm attachment known,
To save your life would nobly risk his own.
Now, which stands highest in your serious thought ?
Charles, without doubt, say you—and so he ought ;
One act that from a thankful heart proceeds,
Excels ten thousand mercenary deeds.
Thus Heav'n approves, as honest and sincere,
The work of gen'rous love and filial fear,
But, with averted eyes, th' omniscient Judge
Scorns the base hireling and the slavish drudge.

The path to bliss abounds with many a snare,
Learning is one, and wit, however rare:
The Frenchman first in literary fame
(Mention him, if you please—Voltaire! the same),
With spirit, genius, eloquence supplied,
Lived long, wrote much, laugh'd heartily, and
died.
The Scripture was his jest-book, whence he drew
Bon-mots to gall the Christian and the Jew:
An infidel in health, but what when sick?
Oh, then a text would touch him at the quick:
View him at Paris in his last career,
Surrounding throngs the demi-god revere;
Exalted on his pedestal of pride,
And fumed with frankincense on ev'ry side,
He begs their flattery with his latest breath,
And, smother'd in't at last, is praised to death.
Yon cottager, who weaves at her own door,
Pillow and bobbins all her little store,
Content though mean, and cheerful, if not gay,
Shuffling her threads about the livelong day,
Just earns a scanty pittance, and at night
Lies down secure, her heart and pocket light;
She, for her humble sphere by nature fit,
Has little understanding, and no wit,
Receives no praise, but (though her lot be such,
Toilsome and indigent) she renders much;
Just knows, and knows no more, her Bible true,
A truth the brilliant Frenchman never knew,
And in that charter reads with sparkling eyes
Her title to a treasure in the skies.
Oh happy peasant! Oh unhappy bard!
His the mere tinsel, hers the rich reward:
He praised perhaps for ages yet to come,
She never heard of half-a mile from home;

He, lost in errors, his vain heart prefers,
She safe in the simplicity of hers.
Not many wise, rich, noble, or profound
In science, win one inch of heav'nly ground:
And is it not a mortifying thought
The poor should gain it, and the rich should not?
No—the voluptuaries, who ne'er forget
One pleasure lost, lose heav'n without regret;
Regret would rouse them and give birth to pray'r,
Pray'r would add faith, and faith would fix them there.
Envy, ye great, the dull unlettered small;
Ye have much cause for envy—but not all;
We boast some rich ones whom the Gospel sways,
And one that wears a coronet and prays:
Like gleanings of an olive-tree they show,
Here and there one upon the topmost bough.
How readily upon the Gospel plan,
That question has its answer—What is man?
Sinful and weak, in ev'ry sense a wretch,
An instrument whose chords upon the stretch,
And strain'd to the last screw that he can bear,
Yield only discord in his Maker's ear.
But what is man in his own proud esteem?
Hear him, himself the poet and the theme;
A monarch clothed with majesty and awe,
His mind his kingdom, and his will his law,
Grace in his mien and glory in his eyes,
Supreme on earth, and worthy of the skies,
Strength in his heart, dominion in his nod,
And, thunderbolts excepted, quite a god.
So sings he, charm'd with his own mind and form,
The song magnificent, the theme a worm:
Himself so much the source of his delight,
His Maker has no beauty in his sight:
See where he sits, contemplative and fix'd,

Pleasure and wonder in his features mix'd,
His passions tamed and all at his control,
How perfect the composure of his soul !
Complacency has breathed a gentle gale
O'er all his thoughts, and swell'd his easy sail :
His books well trimm'd and in the gayest style,
Like regimental coxcombs, rank and file,
Adorn his intellects as well as shelves,
And teach him notions splendid as themselves :
The Bible only stands neglected there,
Though that of all most worthy of his care,
And like an infant, troublesome awake,
Is left to sleep for peace and quiet sake.
What shall the man deserve of humankind,
Whose happy skill and industry combined,
Shall prove (what argument could never yet)
The Bible an imposture and a cheat ?
The praises of the libertine profess'd,
The worst of men, and curses of the best.
Where should the living, weeping o'er his woes,
The dying, trembling at their awful close,
Where the betray'd, forsaken, and oppress'd,
The thousands whom the world forbids to rest,
Where should they find (those comforts at an end
The Scripture yields) or hope to find a friend ?
That field of promise, how it flings abroad
Its odour o'er the Christian's thorny road ;
The soul, reposing on assured relief,
Feels herself happy amidst all her grief,
Forgets her labour as she toils along,
Weeps tears of joy, and bursts into a song.
But the same word, that like the polish'd share,
Ploughs up the roots of a believer's care,
Kills, too, the flow'ry weeds where'er they grow,
That bind the sinner's Bacchanalian brow.

Oh, that unwelcome voice of heavenly love,
Sad messenger of mercy from above,
How does it grate upon his thankless ear,
Crippling his pleasures with the cramp of fear!
His will and judgment at continual strife,
That civil war embitters all his life;
In vain he points his pow'rs against the skies,
In vain he closes or averts his eyes.
Truth will intrude—she bids him yet beware—
And shakes the sceptic in the scorner's chair.
Though various foes against the truth combine,
Pride above all opposes her design;
Pride, of a growth superior to the rest,
The subtlest serpent, with the loftiest crest,
Swells at the thought, and kindling into rage,
Would hiss the cherub Mercy from the stage.
Hear then how Mercy, slighted and defied,
Retorts th' affront against the crown of pride.
Perish the virtue, as it ought, abhorr'd,
And the fool with it that insults his Lord.
Th' atonement a Redeemer's love has wrought
Is not for you, the righteous need it not.
Marshalling all his terrors as He came,
Thunder and earthquake and devouring flame,
From Sinai's top Jehovah gave the law,
Life for obedience, death for every flaw.
When the great Sov'reign would His will express,
He gives a perfect rule; what can He less?
And guards it with a sanction as severe
As vengeance can inflict, or sinners fear:
Else His own glorious rights He would disclaim,
And man might safely trifle with His name;
He bids him glow with unremitting love
To all on earth, and to Himself above;
Condemns the injurious deed, the sland'rous tongue,

The thought that meditates a brother's wrong :
Brings not alone, the more conspicuous part,
His conduct to the test, but tries his heart.
  Hark ! universal nature shook and groan'd,
'Twas the last trumpet—see the Judge enthroned ;
Rouse all your courage at your utmost need,
Now summon every virtue, stand and plead.
What, silent ? Is your boasting heard no more ?
That self-renouncing wisdom, learn'd before,
Had shed immortal glories on your brow,
That all your virtues cannot purchase now.
  All joy to the believer ! He can speak —
Trembling, yet happy, confident, yet meek.
  Since the dear hour that brought me to Thy foot,
And cut up all my follies by the root,
I never trusted in an arm but Thine,
Nor hoped, but in Thy righteousness divine ;
My prayers and alms, imperfect and defiled,
Were but the feeble efforts of a child,
Howe'er perform'd, it was their brightest part,
That they proceeded from a grateful heart ;
Cleansed in Thine own all-purifying blood,
Forgive their evil and accept their good ;
I cast them at Thy feet—my only plea
Is what it was, dependence upon Thee ;
While struggling in the vale of tears below,
That never fail'd, nor shall it fail me now.
  Angelic gratulations rend the skies,
Pride falls unemptied, never more to rise ;
Humility is crown'd, and faith receives the prize.

EXPOSTULATION.

" Tantane, tam patiens, nullo certamine tolli
Dona sines?" —VIRGIL.

WHY weeps the muse for England? What appears
In England's case to move the muse to tears?
From side to side of her delightful isle,
Is she not clothed with a perpetual smile?
Can nature add a charm or art confer
A new-found luxury not seen in her?
Where under heaven is pleasure more pursued,
Or where does cold reflection less intrude?
Her fields, a rich expanse of wavy corn,
Pour'd out from plenty's overflowing horn,
Ambrosial gardens, in which art supplies
The fervour and the force of Indian skies;
Her peaceful shores, where busy commerce waits
To pour his golden tide through all her gates,
All speak her happy—let the muse look round
From East to West, no sorrow can be found,
Or only what, in cottages confined,
Sighs unregarded to the passing wind;
Then wherefore weep for England, what appears
In England's case to move the muse to tears?
The prophet wept for Israel, wish'd his eyes
Were fountains fed with infinite supplies;
For Israel dealt in robbery and wrong,
There were the scorner's and the sland'rer's tongue,
Oaths used as playthings or convenient tools,
As int'rest biass'd knaves, or fashion fools.
He saw his people slaves to ev'ry lust,
Lewd, avaricious, arrogant, unjust;
He heard the wheels of an avenging God

Groan heavily along the distant road ;
Saw Babylon set wide her two-leaved brass
To let the military deluge pass ;
Jerusalem a prey, her glory soil'd,
Her princes captive, and her treasures spoil'd ;
Wept till all Israel heard his bitter cry,
Stamp'd with his foot and smote upon his thigh ;
But wept, and stamp'd, and smote his thigh in vain.
Pleasure is deaf when told of future pain,
And sounds prophetic are too rough to suit
Ears long accustom'd to the pleasing lute ;
They scorn'd his inspiration and his theme,
Pronounced him frantic and his fears a dream,
With self-indulgence wing'd the fleeting hours,
Till the foe found them, and down fell the tow'rs.
When He that ruled them with a shepherd's rod,
In form a man, in dignity a God,
Came not expected in that humble guise,
To sift, and search them with unerring eyes,
He found conceal'd beneath a fair outside,
The filth of rottenness and worm of pride,
Their piety a system of deceit,
Scripture employ'd to sanctify the cheat,
The pharisee the dupe of his own art,
Self-idolised, and yet a knave at heart.
When nations are to perish in their sins,
'Tis in the church the leprosy begins :
The priest, whose office is with zeal sincere
To watch the fountain, and preserve it clear,
Carelessly nods and sleeps upon the brink,
While others poison what the flock must drink ;
Or, waking at the call of lust alone,
Infuses lies and errors of his own :
His unsuspecting sheep believe it pure,
And tainted by the very means of cure,

Catch from each other a contagious spot,
The foul forerunner of a general rot:
Then truth is hush'd that heresy may preach,
And all is trash that reason cannot reach;
While truths, on which eternal things depend,
Find not, or hardly find a single friend:
As soldiers watch the signal of command,
They learn to bow, to kneel, to sit, to stand,
Happy to fill religion's vacant place
With hollow form, and gesture, and grimace.
Such, when the Teacher of His church was there,
People and priest, the sons of Israel were;
Stiff in the letter, lax in the design
And import of their oracles divine,
Their learning legendary, false, absurd,
And yet exalted above God's own word,
They drew a curse from an intended good,
Puff'd up with gifts they never understood.
He judged them with as terrible a frown,
As if, not love, but wrath had brought Him down;
Yet He was gentle as soft summer airs,
Had grace for others' sins, but none for theirs.
Through all He spoke a noble plainness ran,
Rhet'ric is artifice, the work of man,
And tricks and turns that fancy may devise,
Are far too mean for Him that rules the skies.
Th' astonish'd vulgar trembled while He tore
The mask from faces never seen before;
He stripp'd th' impostors in the noonday sun,
Show'd that they follow'd all they seem'd to shun,
Their pray'rs made public, their excesses kept
As private as the chambers where they slept;
The temple and its holy rites profaned
By mumm'ries He that dwelt in it disdain'd;
Uplifted hands, that at convenient times

Could act extortion and the worst of crimes,
Wash'd with a neatness scrupulously nice,
And free from ev'ry taint but that of vice.
Judgment, however tardy, mends her pace
When obstinacy once has conquer'd grace.
They saw distemper heal'd, and life restored
In answer to the fiat of His word,
Confess'd the wonder, and with daring tongue,
Blasphemed th' authority from which it sprung.
They knew by sure prognostics seen on high,
The future tone and temper of the sky,
But grave dissemblers, could not understand
That sin let loose speaks punishment at hand.
  Ask now of history's authentic page,
And call up evidence from ev'ry age,
Display, with busy and laborious hand,
The blessings of the most indebted land,
What nation will you find, whose annals prove
So rich an int'rest in Almighty love?
  They, and they only amongst all mankind,
Received the transcript of th' Eternal Mind,
Were trusted with His own engraven laws,
And constituted guardians of His cause;
Theirs were the prophets, theirs the priestly call,
And theirs by birth the Saviour of us all.
In vain the nations, that had seen them rise
With fierce and envious yet admiring eyes,
Had sought to crush them, guarded as they were
By power divine, and skill that could not err.
Had they maintain'd allegiance firm and sure,
And kept the faith immaculate and pure,
Then the proud eagles of all-conqu'ring Rome
Had found one city not to be o'ercome;
And the twelve standards of the tribes unfurl'd
Had bid defiance to the warring world.

But grace abused brings forth the foulest deeds,
As richest soil the most luxuriant weeds ;
Cured of the golden calves their fathers' sin,
They set up self, that idol-god within,
View'd a Deliv'rer with disdain and hate,
Who left them still a tributary state,
Seized fast His hand, held out to set them free
From a worse yoke, and nail'd it to the tree ;
There was the consummation and the crown,
The flow'r of Israel's infamy full blown ;
Thence date their sad declension and their fall,
Their woes, not yet repeal'd, thence date them all.
O Israel, of all nations most undone !
Thy diadem displaced, thy sceptre gone ;
Thy temple, once thy glory, fallen and rased,
And thou a worshipper e'en where thou mayst ;
Thy services, once holy without spot,
Mere shadows now, their ancient pomp forgot ;
Thy Levites, once a consecrated host,
No longer Levites, and their lineage lost,
And thou thyself o'er ev'ry country sown,
With none on earth that thou canst call thine own ;
Cry aloud, thou that sittest in the dust,
Cry to the proud, the cruel, and unjust,
Knock at the gates of nations, rouse their fears,
Say wrath is coming and the storm appears,
But raise the shrillest cry in British ears.
What ails thee, restless as the waves that roar,
And fling their foam against thy chalky shore ?
Mistress, at least while Providence shall please,
And trident-bearing queen of the wide seas—
Why, having kept good faith, and often shown
Friendship and truth to others, find'st thou none ?
Stand now and judge thyself—hast thou incurr'd
His anger who can waste thee with a word,

Who poises and proportions sea and land,
Weighing them in the hollow of His hand,
And in whose awful sight all nations seem
As grasshoppers, as dust, a drop, a dream?
Hast thou (a sacrilege His soul abhors)
Claim'd all the glory of thy prosp'rous wars,
Proud of thy fleets and armies, stolen the gem
Of His just praise to lavish it on them?
Hast thou not learn'd, what thou art often told,
A truth still sacred, and believed of old,
That no success attends on spears and swords
Unblest, and that the battle is the Lord's?
  Hast thou, though suckled at fair freedom's breast,
Exported slav'ry to the conquer'd East,
Pull'd down the tyrants India served with dread,
And raised thyself, a greater, in their stead,
Gone thither arm'd and hungry, return'd full,
Fed from the richest veins of the Mogul,
A despot big with pow'r obtain'd by wealth,
And that obtain'd by rapine and by stealth?
With Asiatic vices stored thy mind,
But left their virtues and thine own behind,
And, having *truck'd* thy soul, brought home the fee,
To tempt the poor to sell himself to thee?
  Where shall a teacher look in days like these,
For ears and hearts that he can hope to please?
Look to the poor—the simple and the plain
Will hear perhaps thy salutary strain;
Humility is gentle, apt to learn,
Speak but the word, will listen and return:
Alas, not so! the poorest of the flock
Are proud, and set their faces as a rock,
Denied that earthly opulence they choose,
God's better gift they scoff at and refuse.
The rich, the produce of a nobler stem,

Are more intelligent at least, try them :
Oh vain inquiry ! They, without remorse,
Are altogether gone a devious course,
Where beck'ning pleasure leads them, wildly stray,
Have burst the bands and cast the yoke away.
  Now borne upon the wings of truth sublime,
Review thy dim original and prime ;
This island spot of unreclaim'd rude earth,
The cradle that received thee at thy birth,
Was rock'd by many a rough Norwegian blast,
And Danish howlings scared thee as they pass'd ;
For thou wast born amid the din of arms,
And suck'd a breast that panted with alarms.
While yet thou wast a grov'ling, puling chit,
Thy bones not fashion'd and thy joints not knit,
The Roman taught thy stubborn knee to bow,
Though twice a Cæsar could not bend thee now :
His victory was that of orient light,
When the sun's shafts disperse the gloom of night.
Thy language at this distant moment shows
How much the country to the conqu'ror owes ;
Expressive, energetic, and refined,
It sparkles with the gems he left behind :
He brought thy land a blessing when he came,
He found thee savage, and he left thee tame,
Taught thee to clothe thy pink'd and painted hide,
And grace thy figure with a soldier's pride ;
He sow'd the seeds of order where he went,
Improved thee far beyond his own intent,
And while he ruled thee by the sword alone,
Made thee at last a warrior like his own.
Religion, if in heav'nly truths attired,
Needs only to be seen to be admired,
But thine, as dark as witch'ries of the night,
Was form'd to harden hearts and shock the sight :

Thy Druids struck the well-strung harps they bore
With fingers deeply dyed in human gore,
And, while the victim slowly bled to death,
Upon the tolling chords rung out his dying breath.
Kneel now, and lay thy forehead in the dust,
Blush if thou canst, not petrified, thou must:
Act but an honest and a faithful part,
Compare what then thou wast, with what thou art,
And God's disposing providence confess'd,
Obduracy itself must yield the rest—
Then thou art bound to serve Him, and to prove
Hour after hour thy gratitude and love.
So then—as darkness overspread the deep,
Ere Nature rose from her eternal sleep,
And this delightful earth and that fair sky
Leap'd out of nothing, call'd by the Most High,
By such a change thy darkness is made light,
Thy chaos order, and thy weakness, might,
And He whose power mere nullity obeys,
Who found thee nothing, form'd thee for His praise.
To praise Him is to serve Him, and fulfil,
Doing and suff'ring His unquestion'd will,
'Tis to believe what men inspired of old,
Faithful and faithfully inform'd, unfold;
Candid and just, with no false aim in view,
To take for truth what cannot but be true;
To learn in God's own school the Christian part,
And bind the task assign'd thee to thine heart:
Happy the man there seeking and there found,
Happy the nation where such men abound.
But above all reflect, how cheap soe'er
Those rights that millions envy thee appear,
And though resolved to risk them, and swim down
The tide of pleasure, heedless of His frown,
That blessings truly sacred, and when giv'n

Mark'd with the signature and stamp of Heav'n,
The word of prophecy, those truths divine
Which make that Heav'n, if thou desire it, thine ;
(Awful alternative ! believed, beloved,
Thy glory, and thy shame if unimproved,)
Are never long vouchsafed, if push'd aside
With cold disgust, or philosophic pride,
And that judicially withdrawn, disgrace,
Error, and darkness occupy their place.
Say not (and if the thought of such defence
Should spring within thy bosom, drive it thence),
What nation amongst all my foes is free
From crimes as base as any charged on me ?
Their measure fill'd—they too shall pay the debt
Which God, though long forborne, will not forget :
But know, that wrath divine, when most severe,
Makes justice still the guide of his career,
And will not punish in one mingled crowd,
Them without light, and thee without a cloud.
Muse, hang this harp upon yon aged beech,
Still murm'ring with the solemn truths I teach,
And while, at intervals, a cold blast sings
Through the dry leaves, and pants upon the strings,
My soul shall sigh in secret, and lament
A nation scourged, yet tardy to repent.
I know the warning song is sung in vain,
That few will hear, and fewer heed the strain :
But if a sweeter voice, and one design'd
A blessing to my country and mankind,
Reclaim the wand'ring thousands, and bring home
A flock so scatter'd and so wont to roam,
Then place it once again between my knees ;
The sound of truth will then be sure to please,
And truth alone, where'er my life be cast,
In scenes of plenty, or the pining waste,
Shall be my chosen theme, my glory to the last.

HOPE.

"———doceas iter, et sacra ostia pandas."
—VIRGIL, En. vi.

ASK what is human life—the sage replies,
With disappointment low'ring in his eyes,
A painful passage o'er a restless flood,
A vain pursuit of fugitive false good,
A scene of fancied bliss and heartfelt care,
Closing at last in darkness and despair.—
The poor, inured to drudgery and distress,
Act without aim, think little, and feel less,
And nowhere, but in feign'd Arcadian scenes,
Taste happiness, or know what pleasure means.
Riches are pass'd away from hand to hand,
As fortune, vice, or folly may command;
As in a dance the pair that take the lead
Turn downwards, and the lowest pair succeed,
So shifting and so various is the plan,
By which Heav'n rules the mix'd affairs of man;
Vicissitude wheels round the motley crowd,
The rich grow poor, the poor become purse-proud:
Bus'ness is labour, and man's weakness such,
Pleasure is labour too, and tires as much,
The very sense of it foregoes its use,
By repetition pall'd, by age obtuse.
Youth lost in dissipation, we deplore
Through life's sad remnant, what no sighs restore;
Our years, a fruitless race without a prize,
Too many, yet too few to make us wise.
Thus things terrestrial wear a diff'rent hue,
As youth, or age persuades, and neither true;
So Flora's wreath through colour'd crystal seen,
The rose, the lily, appears blue or green.

But still th' imputed tints are those alone
The medium represents, and not their own.
  To rise at noon, sit slipshod and undress'd,
To read the news, or fiddle, as seems best,
'Till half the world comes rattling at his door,
To fill the dull vacuity till four,
While conversation, an exhausted stock,
Grows drowsy as the clicking of a clock.
No need, he cries, of gravity stuff'd out
With academic dignity devout,
To read wise lectures, vanity the text;
Proclaim the remedy, ye learned, next,
For truth self-evident, with pomp impress'd,
Is vanity surpassing all the rest.
  That remedy, not hid in deeps profound,
Yet seldom sought where only to be found,
While passion turns aside from its due scope
Th' inquirer's aim, that remedy, is Hope,
Life is His gift, from whom whate'er life needs,
And ev'ry good and perfect gift proceeds,
Bestow'd on man, like all that we partake,
Royally, freely, for His bounty sake.
Transient indeed, as is the fleeting hour,
And yet the seed of an immortal flow'r,
Design'd in honour of His endless love,
To fill with fragrance His abode above.
No trifle, howsoever short it seem,
And howsoever shadowy, no dream,
Its value, what no thought can ascertain,
Nor all an angel's eloquence explain.
  Hope sets the stamp of vanity on all
That men have deem'd substantial since the fall,
Yet has the wondrous virtue to educe
From emptiness itself a real use,
And while she takes, as at a father's hand,

What health and sober appetite demand,
From fading good derives with chymic art
That lasting happiness, a thankful heart.
Hope, with uplifted foot set free from earth,
Pants for the place of her ethereal birth,
On steady wings sails through th' immense abyss.
Plucks amaranthine joys from bow'rs of bliss,
And crowns the soul, while yet a mourner here,
With wreaths like those triumphant spirits wear.
Hope, as an anchor firm and sure, holds fast
The Christian vessel, and defies the blast;
Hope! nothing else can nourish and secure
His new-born virtues, and preserve him pure;
Hope! let the wretch once conscious of the joy,
Whom now despairing agonies destroy,
Speak, for he can, and none so well as he,
What treasures centre, what delights in thee.
Had he the gems, the spices, and the land
That boasts the treasure, all at his command,
The fragrant grove, th' inestimable mine,
Were light when weigh'd against one smile of thine.
Peace be to those (such peace as earth can give)
Who live in pleasure, dead ev'n while they live,
Born capable indeed of heav'nly truth,
But down to latest age from earliest youth,
Their mind a wilderness, through want of care,
The plough of wisdom never ent'ring there.
Peace (if insensibility may claim
A right to the meek honours of her name)
To men of pedigree, their noble race
Emulous always of the nearest place
To any throne, except the throne of grace.
Let cottagers and unenlighten'd swains
Revere the laws they dream that Heav'n ordains,
Resort on Sundays to the house of pray'r,

And ask, and fancy they find blessings there ;
Themselves perhaps, when weary they retreat
T'enjoy cool nature in a country seat,
T'exchange the centre of a thousand trades,
For clumps, and lawns, and temples, and cascades,
May now and then their velvet cushions take,
And seem to pray for good example sake ;
Judging, in charity no doubt, the town
Pious enough, and having need of none.
Kind souls ! to teach their tenantry to prize
What they themselves without remorse despise ;
Nor hope have they nor fear of aught to come,
As well for them had prophecy been dumb ;
They could have held the conduct they pursue,
Had Paul of Tarsus lived and died a Jew ;
And truth proposed to reas'ners wise as they,
Is a pearl cast—completely cast away.
They die—Death lends them, pleased and as in [sport,
All the grim honours of his ghastly court ;
Far other paintings grace the chamber now,
Where late we saw the mimic landscape glow
The busy heralds hang the sable scene
With mournful 'scutcheons and dim lamps between,
Proclaim their titles to the crowd around,
But they, that wore them, moved not at the sound ;
The coronet placed idly at their head,
Adds nothing now to the degraded dead,
And ev'n the star that glitters on the bier,
Can only say, Nobility lies here.
Peace to all such—'twere pity to offend
By useless censure whom we cannot mend ;
Life without hope can close but in despair,
'Twas there we found them and must leave them there.
Yet half mankind maintain a churlish strife
With Him, the donor of eternal life,

Because the deed, by which His love confirms
The largess He bestows, prescribes the terms.
Compliance with His will your lot insures,
Accept it only, and the boon is yours ;
And sure it is as kind to smile and give,
As with a frown to say, Do this and live.
Love is not pedler's trumpery, bought and sold,
He *will* give freely, or He *will* withhold,
His soul abhors a mercenary thought,
And him as deeply who abhors it not ;
He stipulates indeed, but merely this,
That man will freely take an unbought bliss,
Will trust Him for a faithful genr'ous part,
Nor set a price upon a willing heart.
Of all the ways that seem to promise fair,
To place you where His saints His presence share,
This only can—for this plain cause, express'd
In terms as plain ; Himself has shut the rest.
But oh, the strife, the bick'ring, and debate,
The tidings of unpurchased heav'n create !
The flirted fan, the bridle, and the toss,
All speakers, yet all language at a loss.
From stucco'd walls smart arguments rebound,
And beaus, adepts in ev'ry thing profound,
Die of disdain, or whistle off the sound.
Such is the clamour of rooks, daws, and kites,
Th' explosion of the levell'd tube excites,
Where mould'ring abbey walls o'erhang the glade,
And oaks coeval spread a mournful shade ;
The screaming nations hov'ring in mid air,
Loudly resent the stranger's freedom there,
And seem to warn him never to repeat
His bold intrusion on their dark retreat.
And yet our lot is giv'n us in a land
Where busy arts are never at a stand,

Where science points her telescopic eye,
Familiar with the wonders of the sky,
Where bold inquiry, diving out of sight,
Brings many a precious pearl of truth to light,
Where nought eludes the persevering quest,
That fashion, taste, or luxury suggest,
  But above all, in her own light array'd,
See Mercy's grand apocalypse display'd !
The sacred Book no longer suffers wrong,
Bound in the fetters of an unknown tongue,
But speaks with plainness art could never mend,
What simplest minds can soonest comprehend.
God gives the word, the preachers throng around,
Live from his lips, and spread the glorious sound :
That sound bespeaks salvation on her way,
The trumpet of a life-restoring day ;
'Tis heard where England's eastern glory shines,
And in the gulphs of her Cornubian mines.
  Throughout mankind, the Christian kind at least,
There dwells a consciousness in ev'ry breast,
That folly ends where genuine hope begins,
And he that finds his heav'n must lose his sins :
Nature opposes with her utmost force
This riving stroke, this ultimate divorce,
And while religion seems to be her view,
Hates with a deep sincerity *the true ;*
For this of all that ever influenced man,
Since Abel worshipp'd, or the world began,
This only spares no lust, admits no plea,
But makes him, if at all, completely free,
Sounds forth the signal as she mounts her car,
Of an eternal, universal war,
Rejects all treaty, penetrates all wiles,
Scorns with the same indiff rence frowns and smiles,
Drives through the realms of sin, where riot reels,

And grinds his crown beneath her burning wheels!
Hence all that is in man, pride, passion, art,
Pow'rs of the mind, and feelings of the heart,
Insensible of truth's almighty charms,
Starts at her first approach, and sounds to arms!
While Bigotry, with well-dissembled fears,
His eyes shut fast, his fingers in his ears,
Mighty to parry, and push by God's word
With senseless noise, his argument the sword,
Pretends a zeal for godliness and grace,
And spits abhorrence in the Christian's face.
Parent of hope, immortal Truth, make known
Thy deathless wreaths, and triumphs all thine own:
The silent progress of thy pow'r is such,
Thy means so feeble, and despised so much,
That few believe the wonders thou hast wrought,
And none can teach them but whom thou hast taught.
Happy the bard (if that fair name belong
To him that blends no fable with his song)
Whose lines uniting, by an honest art,
The faithful monitor's and poet's part,
Seek to delight, that they may mend mankind,
And while they captivate, inform the mind.
Still happier, if he till a thankful soil,
And fruit reward his honourable toil:
But happier far who comfort those that wait
To hear plain truth, at Judah's hallow'd gate;
Their language simple as their manners meek,
No shining ornaments have they to seek,
Nor labour they, nor time, nor talents waste
In sorting flowers to suit a fickle taste;
But while they speak the wisdom of the skies,
Which art can only darken and disguise,
Th' abundant harvest, recompense divine,
Repays their work—the gleaning only, mine.

CHARITY.

" Quâ nihil majus meliusve terris
Fata donavere, bonique divi;
Nec dabunt, quamvis redeant in aurum
Tempora priscum."
—HOR. Lib. iv. Ode ii.

FAIREST and foremost of the train that wait
On man's most dignified and happiest state,
Whether we name thee Charity, or love,
Chief grace below, and all in all above,
Prosper (I press thee with a pow'rful plea),
A task I venture on, impell'd by thee:
Oh, never seen but in thy blest effects,
Nor felt but in the soul that Heav'n selects,
Who seeks to praise thee, and to make thee known
To other hearts, must have thee in his own.
Come, prompt me with benevolent desires,
Teach me to kindle at thy gentle fires,
And, though disgraced and slighted, to redeem
A poet's name, by making thee the theme.
The soul, whose sight all-quick'ning grace renews,
Takes the resemblance of the good she views,
As di'monds, stripp'd of their opaque disguise,
Reflect the noonday glory of the skies.
She speaks of him, her author, guardian, friend,
Whose love knew no beginning, knows no end,
In language warm as all that love inspires,
And, in the glow of her intense desires,
Pants to communicate her noble fires.
She sees a world stark blind to what employs
Her eager thought, and feeds her flowing joys,
Though wisdom hail them, heedless of her call,
Flies to save some, and feels a pang for all;

Herself as weak as her support is strong,
She feels that frailty she denied so long,
And from a knowledge of her own disease,
Learns to compassionate the sick she sees.
Here see, acquitted of all vain pretence,
The reign of genuine Charity commence;
Though scorn repay her sympathetic tears,
She still is kind, and still she perseveres;
The truth she loves, a sightless world blaspheme,
'Tis childish dotage, a delirious dream,
The danger they discern not, they deny,
Laugh at their only remedy, and die:
But still a soul, thus touch'd, can never cease
Whoever threatens war, to speak of peace,
Pure in her aim and in her temper mild,
Her wisdom seems the weakness of a child,
She makes excuses where she might condemn,
Reviled by those that hate her, prays for them;
Suspicion lurks not in her artless breast,
The worst suggested, she believes the best;
Not soon provoked, however stung and teased,
And, if perhaps made angry, soon appeased,
She rather waives than will dispute her right,
And, injured, makes forgiveness her delight.
  Such was the portrait an apostle drew,
The bright original was one he knew,
Heav'n held his hand, the likeness must be true.
  When one, that holds communion with the skies,
Has filled his urn where these pure waters rise,
And once more mingles with us meaner things,
'Tis ev'n as if an angel shook his wings:
Immortal fragrance fills the circuit wide,
That tells us whence his treasures are supplied.
So when a ship, well freighted with the stores
The sun matures on India's spicy shores,

Has dropp'd her anchor and her canvas furl'd,
In some safe haven of our western world,
'Twere vain inquiry to what port she went,
The gale informs us, laden with the scent.
True Charity, a plant divinely nursed,
Fed by the love from which it rose at first,
Thrives against hope and in the rudest scene,
Storms but enliven its unfading green ;
Exub'rant is the shadow it supplies,
Its fruit on earth, its growth above the skies.
Where love in these the world's last doting years
As frequent, as the want of it appears,
The churches warm'd, they would no longer hold
Such frozen figures, stiff as they are cold ;
Relenting forms would lose their pow'r or cease,
And e'en the dipt and sprinkled live in peace ;
Each heart would quit its prison in the breast,
And flow in free communion with the rest.
The statesman, skill'd in projects dark and deep,
Might burn his useless Machiavel, and sleep ;
His budget, often fill'd yet always poor,
Might swing at ease behind his study-door,
No longer prey upon our annual rents,
Nor scare the nation with its big contents ;
Disbanded legions freely might depart,
And slaying man would cease to be an art.
No learned disputants would take the field,
Sure not to conquer, and sure not to yield,
Both sides deceived if rightly understood,
Pelting each other for the public good.
Did Charity prevail, the press would prove
A vehicle of virtue, truth, and love,
And I might spare myself the pains to show
What few can learn, and all suppose they know.
Thus have I sought to grace a serious lay

With many a wild, indeed, but flow'ry spray,
In hopes to gain what else I must have lost,
Th' attention pleasure has so much engross'd.
But if unhappily deceived I dream,
And prove too weak for so divine a theme,
Let Charity forgive me a mistake
That zeal, not vanity, has chanced to make,
And spare the poet for his subject sake.

CONVERSATION.

"Nam neque me tantum venientis sibilus austri,
Nec percussa juvant fluctu tam litora, nec quæ
Saxosas inter decurrunt flumina valles."

—VIRGIL, Ecl. v.

THOUGH nature weigh our talents, and dispense
To every man his modicum of sense,
And Conversation in its better part
May be esteem'd a gift, and not an art,
Yet much depends, as in the tiller's toil,
On culture and the sowing of the soil.
Words learn'd by rote a parrot may rehearse.
But talking is not always to converse,
Not more distinct from harmony divine
The constant creaking of a country sign.
As alphabets in ivory employ
Hour after hour the yet unletter'd boy,
Sorting and puzzling with a deal of glee
Those seeds of science called his A B C,
So language in the mouths of the adult,
Witness its insignificant result,
Too often proves an implement of play,
A toy to sport with, and pass time away.
Collect at evening what the day brought forth,

Compress the sum into its solid worth,
And if it weigh th' importance of a fly,
The scales are false, or algebra a lie.
Sacred interpreter of human thought,
How few respect or use thee as they ought!
But all shall give account of every wrong
Who dare dishonour or defile the tongue,
Who prostitute it in the cause of vice,
Or sell their glory at a market-price,
Who vote for hire, or point it with lampoon,
The dear-bought placeman, and the cheap buffoon.
Ye pow'rs who rule the tongue, if such there are,
And make colloquial happiness your care,
Preserve me from the thing I dread and hate,
A duel in the form of a debate:
The clash of arguments and jar of words,
Worse than the mortal brunt of rival swords,
Decide no question with their tedious length,
For opposition gives opinion strength.
Divert the champions prodigal of breath,
And put the peaceably-disposed to death.
Oh thwart me not, Sir Soph, at ev'ry turn,
Nor carp at ev'ry flaw you may discern,
Though syllogisms hang not on my tongue,
I am not, surely, always in the wrong;
'Tis hard if all is false that I advance,
A fool must now and then be right, by chance,
Not that all freedom of dissent I blame,
No—there I grant the privilege I claim.
A disputable point is no man's ground,
Rove where you please, 'tis common all around,
Discourse may want an animated—No—
To brush the surface and to make it flow,
But still remember, if you mean to please,
To press your point with modesty and ease.

The mark at which my jester aim I take,
Is contradiction for its own dear sake ;
Set your opinion at whatever pitch,
Knots and impediments make something hitch,
Adopt his own, 'tis equally in vain,
Your thread of argument is snapp'd again ;
The wrangler, rather than accord with you,
Will judge *himself* deceived, and prove it too.
Vociferated logic kills me quite,
A noisy man is always in the right,
I twirl my thumbs, fall back into my chair,
Fix on the wainscot a distressful stare,
And, when I hope his blunders are all out,
Reply discreetly—To be sure—no doubt.
  Th' emphatic speaker dearly loves t'oppose
In contact inconvenient, nose to nose,
As if the gnomon on his neighbour's phiz,
Touch'd with a magnet had attracted his.
His whisper'd theme, dilated and at large,
Proves after all a wind-gun's airy charge,
An extract of his diary—no more,
A tasteless journal of the day before.
He walk'd abroad, o'ertaken in the rain,
Call'd on a friend, drank tea, stept home again,
Resumed his purpose, had a world of talk
With one he stumbled on, and lost his walk.
I interrupt him with a sudden bow,
Adieu, dear sir ! lest you should lose it now.
  Some men employ their health, an ugly trick,
In making known how oft they have been sick,
And give us in recitals of disease
A doctor's trouble, but without the fees :
Relate how many weeks they kept their bed,
How an emetic or cathartic sped,
Nothing is slightly touch'd, much less forgot,

Nose, ears, and eyes seem present on the spot.
Now the distemper, spite of draught or pill,
Victorious seem'd, and now the doctor's skill ;
And now—alas for unforeseen mishaps !
They put on a damp nightcap, and relapse ;
They thought they must have died, they were so bad,—
Their peevish hearers almost wish they had.

. . . . . .

It happen'd on a solemn even-tide,
Soon after He that was our surety died,
Two bosom friends, each pensively inclined,
The scene of all those sorrows left behind,
Sought their own village, busied as they went
In musings worthy of the great event :
They spake of Him they loved, of Him whose life
Though blameless had incurr'd perpetual strife,
Whose deeds had left, in spite of hostile arts,
A deep memorial graven on their hearts ;
The recollection, like a vein of ore,
The farther traced enrich'd them still the more,
They thought Him, and they justly thought Him one
Sent to do more than He appeared t' have done,
T' exalt a people, and to place them high
Above all else, and wonder'd He should die.
Ere yet they brought their journey to an end,
A stranger join'd them, courteous as a friend,
And ask'd them, with a kind engaging air,
What their affliction was, and begg'd a share.
Inform'd, He gather'd up the broken thread,
And truth and wisdom gracing all He said,
Explain'd, illustrated, and search'd so well
The tender theme on which they chose to dwell,
That reaching home, The night, they said, is near,
We must not now be parted, sojourn here.
The new acquaintance soon became a guest,

And made so welcome at their simple feast,
He bless'd the bread, but vanish'd at the word,
And left them both exclaiming—'Twas the Lord!
Did not our hearts feel all He deign'd to say,
Did they not burn within us by the way?
Now theirs was converse such as it behoves
Man to maintain, and such as God approves;
Their views, indeed, were indistinct and dim,
But yet successful, being aim'd at Him.
But conversation, choose what theme we may,
And chiefly when Religion leads the way,
Should flow like waters after summer show'rs,
Not as if raised by mere mechanic pow'rs.
The Christian, in whose soul, though now distress'd,
Lives the dear thought of joys he once possess'd,
When all his glowing language issued forth
With God's deep stamp upon its current worth,
Will speak without disguise, and must impart,
Sad as it is, his undissembling heart,
Abhors constraint, and dares not feign a zeal.
Or seem to boast a fire he does not feel.
The Song of Sion is a tasteless thing,
Unless when rising on a joyful wing
The soul can mix with the celestial bands,
And give the strain the compass it demands.

RETIREMENT.

"—— studiis florens ignobilis oti."—VIRG. Geor. Lib. iv.

HACKNEY'D in business, wearied at that oar
Which thousands, once fast chain'd to, quit no more,
But which, when life at ebb runs weak and low,
All wish, or seem to wish they could forego,

The statesman, lawyer, merchant, man of trade,
Pants for the refuge of some rural shade,
Where, all his long anxieties forgot
Amid the charms of a sequester'd spot,
Or recollected only to gild o'er
And add a smile to what was sweet before,
He may possess the joys he thinks he sees,
Lay his old age upon the lap of ease,
Improve the remnant of his wasted span,
And, having lived a trifler, die a man.
Thus conscience pleads her cause within the breast,
Though long rebell'd against, not yet suppress'd,
And calls a creature form'd for God alone,
For Heaven's high purposes and not his own,
Calls him away from selfish ends and aims,
From what debilitates and what inflames,
From cities humming with a restless crowd,
Sordid as active, ignorant as loud,
Whose highest praise is that they live in vain,
The dupes of pleasure, or the slaves of gain,
Where works of man are cluster'd close around,
And works of God are hardly to be found,
To regions where, in spite of sin and woe,
Traces of Eden are still seen below,
Where mountain, river, forest, field, and grove,
Remind him of his Maker's pow'r and love.
'Tis well if look'd for at so late a day,
In the last scene of such a senseless play,
True wisdom will attend his feeble call,
And grace his action ere the curtain fall.
Souls that have long despised their heav'nly birth,
Their wishes all impregnated with earth,
For threescore years, employ'd with ceaseless care
In catching smoke and feeding upon air,
Conversant only with the ways of men,

Rarely redeem the short remaining ten.
Invet'rate habits choke th' unfruitful heart,
Their fibres penetrate its tend'rest part,
And, draining its nutritious pow'rs to feed
Their noxious growth, starve ev'ry better seed.
Not that I mean t' approve or would enforce
A superstitious and monastic course:
Truth is not local, God alike pervades
And fills the world of traffic and the shades,
And may be fear'd amid the busiest scenes,
Or scorn'd where business never intervenes.
But 'tis not easy with a mind like ours,
Conscious of weakness in its noblest pow'rs,
And in a world where (other ills apart)
The roving eye misleads the careless heart,
To limit thought, by nature prone to stray
Wherever freakish fancy points the way,
To bid the pleadings of self-love be still,
Resign our own, and seek our Maker's will;
To spread the page of Scripture, and compare
Our conduct with the laws engraven there,
To measure all that passes in the breast,
Faithfully, fairly, by that sacred test;
To dive into the secret deeps within,
To spare no passion and no fav'rite sin,
And search the themes important above all,
Ourselves, and our recov'ry from our fall.
But leisure, silence, and a mind released
From anxious thoughts how wealth may be increased,
How to secure in some propitious hour
The point of int'rest, or the post of power,
A soul serene, and equally retired,
From objects too much dreaded, or desired,
Safe from the clamours of perverse dispute,
At least are friendly to the great pursuit.

Ye groves (the statesman at his desk exclaims,
Sick of a thousand disappointed aims),
My patrimonial treasure and my pride,
Beneath your shades your grey possessor hide,
Receive me, languishing for that repose
The servant of the public never knows.
Ye saw me once (ah, those regretted days,
When boyish innocence was all my praise),
Hour after hour delightfully allot
To studies then familiar, since forgot,
And cultivate a taste for ancient song,
Catching its ardour as I mused along ;
Nor seldom, as propitious Heav'n might send,
What once I valued and could boast, a friend,
Were witnesses how cordially I press'd
His undissembling virtue to my breast ;
Receive me now, not uncorrupt as then,
Nor guiltless of corrupting other men,
But versed in arts that, while they seem to stay
A fallen empire, hasten its decay.
To the fair haven of my native home,
The wreck of what I was, fatigued I come,
For once I can approve the patriot's voice,
And make the course he recommends, my choice ;
We meet at last in one sincere desire,
His wish and mine both prompt me to retire.
'Tis done—he steps into the welcome chaise,
Lolls at his ease behind four handsome bays,
That whirl away from bus'ness and debate
The disencumber'd Atlas of the state.
A mind unnerved, and indisposed to bear
The weight of subjects worthiest of her care,
Whatever hopes a change of scene inspires,
Must change her nature, or in vain retires.

An idler is a watch that wants both hands,
As useless if it goes, as when it stands.
  Friends (for I cannot stint as some have done,
Too rigid in my views that name to one,
Though one, I grant it, in the gen'rous breast
Will stand advanced a step above the rest ;
Flow'rs by that name promiscuously we call,
But one, the rose, the regent of them all),
Friends, not adopted with a schoolboy's haste,
But chosen with a nice discerning taste,
Well-born, well-disciplined, who, placed apart
From vulgar minds, have honour much at heart,
And (though the world may think th' ingredients odd)
The love of virtue, and the fear of God !
Such friends prevent, what else would soon succeed,
A temper rustic as the life we lead,
And keep the polish of the manners clean,
As theirs who bustle in the busiest scene.
For solitude, however some may rave,
Seeming a sanctuary, proves a grave,
A sepulchre in which the living lie,
Where all good qualities grow sick and die.
I praise the Frenchman, his remark was shrewd—
How sweet, how passing sweet is solitude !
But grant me still a friend in my retreat,
Whom I may whisper,—Solitude is sweet.
  Religion does not censure or exclude
Unnumber'd pleasures, harmlessly pursued.
To study culture, and with artful toil
To meliorate and tame the stubborn soil ;
To give dissimilar yet fruitful lands,
The grain, or herb, or plant, that each demands ;
To cherish virtue in a humble state,
And share the joys your bounty may create ;
To mark the matchless workings of the power

That shuts within its seed the future flower,
Bids these in elegance of form excel,
In colour these, and those delight the smell,
Sends Nature forth, the daughter of the skies,
To dance on earth, and charm all human eyes ;
To teach the canvas innocent deceit,
Or lay the landscape on the snowy sheet—
These, these are arts pursued without a crime,
That leave no stain upon the wing of time.
Me poetry (or rather notes that aim
Feebly and vainly at poetic fame)
Employs, shut out from more important views,
Fast by the banks of the slow-winding Ouse ;
Content if, thus sequester'd, I may raise
A monitor's, though not a poet's praise,
And while I teach an art, too little known,
To close life wisely, may not waste my own.

A FABLE.

A RAVEN, while with glossy breast
Her new-laid eggs she fondly press'd,
And on her wicker-work high mounted,
Her chickens prematurely counted
(A fault philosopher might blame
If quite exempted from the same),
Enjoy'd at ease the genial day,
'Twas April as the bumpkins say,
The legislature call'd it May.
But suddenly a wind, as high
As ever swept a winter sky,
Shook the young leaves about her ears,
And fill'd her with a thousand fears,

Lest the rude blast should snap the bough,
And spread her golden hopes below.
But just at eve the blowing weather
And all her fears were hush'd together:
And now, quoth poor unthinking Raph,
'Tis over, and the brood is safe;
(For ravens, though as birds of omen
They teach both conj'rers and old women
To tell us what is to befall,
Can't prophesy, themselves, at all;)
The morning came, when neighbour Hodge,
Who long had mark'd her airy lodge,
And destined all the treasure there
A gift to his expecting fair,
Climb'd like a squirrel to his dray,
And bore the worthless prize away.

A COMPARISON.

ADDRESSED TO A YOUNG LADY.

SWEET stream, that winds through yonder glade,
Apt emblem of a virtuous maid,
Silent and chaste she steals along,
Far from the world's gay, busy throng,
With gentle yet prevailing force,
Intent upon her destined course;
Graceful and useful all she does,
Blessing and blest where'er she goes,
Pure-bosom'd as that wat'ry glass,
And heav'n reflected in her face.

VERSES

SUPPOSED TO BE WRITTEN BY ALEXANDER SELKIRK, DURING HIS SOLITARY ABODE IN THE ISLAND OF JUAN FERNANDEZ.

I AM monarch of all I survey,
My right there is none to dispute,
From the centre all round to the sea,
I am lord of the fowl and the brute.
Oh solitude! where are the charms
That sages have seen in thy face?
Better dwell in the midst of alarms,
Than reign in this horrible place.

I am out of humanity's reach,
I must finish my journey alone,
Never hear the sweet music of speech—
I start at the sound of my own.
The beasts that roam over the plain,
My form with indifference see,
They are so unacquainted with man,
Their tameness is shocking to me.

Society, friendship, and love,
Divinely bestow'd upon man—
Oh, had I the wings of a dove,
How soon would I taste you again!
My sorrows I then might assuage
In the ways of religion and truth,
Might learn from the wisdom of age,
And be cheer'd by the sallies of youth.

Religion! what treasure untold
Resides in that heavenly word!

More precious than silver and gold,
Or all that this earth can afford.
But the sound of the church-going bell
These valleys and rocks never heard,
Ne'er sigh'd at the sound of a knell,
Or smiled when a Sabbath appear'd.

Ye winds, that have made me your sport,
Convey to this desolate shore
Some cordial endearing report
Of a land I shall visit no more.
My friends, do they now and then send
A wish or a thought after me?
Oh, tell me I yet have a friend,
Though a friend I am never to see.

How fleet is a glance of the mind!
Compared with the speed of its flight,
The tempest itself lags behind,
And the swift-winged arrows of light.
When I think of my own native land,
In a moment I seem to be there;
But alas, recollection at hand
Soon hurries me back to despair.

But the sea-fowl is gone to her nest,
The beast is laid down in his lair,
Even here is a season of rest,
And I to my cabin repair.
There is mercy in every place,
And mercy, encouraging thought!
Gives even affliction a grace,
And reconciles man to his lot.

ODE TO PEACE.

COME, peace of mind, delightful guest!
Return and make thy downy nest
Once more in this sad heart:
Nor riches I, nor pow'r pursue,
Nor hold forbidden joys in view,
We therefore need not part.

Where wilt thou dwell if not with me,
From av'rice and ambition free,
And pleasure's fatal wiles;
For whom, alas! dost thou prepare
The sweets that I was wont to share,
The banquet of thy smiles?

The great, the gay, shall they partake
The heav'n that thou alone canst make,
And wilt thou quit the stream
That murmurs through the dewy mead,
The grove, and the sequester'd shed,
To be a guest with them?

For thee I panted, thee I prized,
For thee I gladly sacrificed
Whate'er I loved before,
And shall I see thee start away,
And helpless, hopeless, hear thee say—
Farewell! we meet no more?

HUMAN FRAILTY.

WEAK and irresolute is man ;
The purpose of to-day,
Woven with pains into his plan,
To-morrow rends away.

The bow well bent and smart the spring,
Vice seems already slain,
But passion rudely snaps the string,
And it revives again.

Some foe to his upright intent
Finds out his weaker part,
Virtue engages his assent,
But pleasure winds his heart.

'Tis here the folly of the wise
Through all his art we view,
And while his tongue the charge denies,
His conscience owns it true.

Bound on a voyage of awful length,
And dangers little known,
A stranger to superior strength,
Man vainly trusts his own.

But oars alone can ne'er prevail
To reach the distant coast,
The breath of heav'n must swell the sail,
Or all the toil is lost.

REPORT

OF AN ADJUDGED CASE NOT TO BE FOUND IN ANY OF THE BOOKS.

BETWEEN Nose and Eyes a strange contest arose,
The spectacles set them unhappily wrong;
The point in dispute was, as all the world knows,
To which the said spectacles ought to belong.

So the Tongue was the lawyer, and argued the case
With a great deal of skill, and a wig full of learning,
While Chief Baron Ear sat to balance the laws,
So famed for his talent in nicely discerning.

In behalf of the Nose, it will quickly appear,
And your lordship, he said, will undoubtedly find,
That the Nose has had spectacles always in wear,
Which amounts to possession time out of mind.

Then, holding the spectacles up to the court—
Your lordship observes they are made with a straddle,
As wide as the ridge of the Nose is, in short,
Design'd to sit close to it, just like a saddle.

Again, would your lordship a moment suppose
('Tis a case that has happen'd, and may be again)
That the visage, or countenance, had not a Nose,
Pray who would or who could wear spectacles then?

On the whole it appears, and my argument shows,
With a reasoning the court will never condemn,
That the spectacles plainly were made for the Nose,
And the Nose was as plainly intended for them.

Then, shifting his side as a lawyer knows how,
He pleaded again in behalf of the Eyes,
But what were his arguments few people know,
For the court did not think they were equally wise.

So his lordship decreed with a grave solemn tone,
Decisive and clear, without one if or but—
That whenever the Nose put his spectacles on,
By daylight or candlelight—Eyes should be shut.

THE LOVE OF THE WORLD REPROVED;

OR, HYPOCRISY DETECTED.

THUS says the prophet of the Turk,
Good Mussulman abstain from pork;
There is a part in ev'ry swine,
No friend or follower of mine
May taste, whate'er his inclination,
On pain of excommunication.
Such Mahomet's mysterious charge,
And thus he left the point at large.
Had he the sinful part express'd,
They might with safety eat the rest;
But for one piece they thought it hard
From the whole hog to be debarr'd,
And set their wit at work to find
What joint the prophet had in mind.
Much controversy straight arose,
These choose the back, the belly those;
By some 'tis confidently said
He meant not to forbid the head,

While others at that doctrine rail,
And piously prefer the tail.
Thus, conscience freed from ev'ry clog,
Mahometans eat up the hog.
  You laugh—'tis well—the tale applied
May make you laugh on t'other side.
Renounce the world, the preacher cries—
We do—a multitude replies;
While one as innocent regards
A snug and friendly game at cards;
And one, whatever you may say,
Can see no evil in a play;
Some love a concert or a race,
And others, shooting and the chase.
Reviled and loved, renounced and follow'd,
Thus bit by bit the world is swallow'd;
Each thinks his neighbour makes too free,
Yet likes a slice as well as he.
With sophistry their sauce they sweeten,
Till quite from tail to snout 'tis eaten.

THE LILY AND THE ROSE.

THE nymph must lose her female friend
  If more admired than she—
But where will fierce contention end
  If flow'rs can disagree?

Within the garden's peaceful scene
  Appear'd two lovely foes,
Aspiring to the rank of queen,
  The lily and the rose.

The rose soon redden'd into rage,
And, swelling with disdain,
Appeal'd to many a poet's page
To prove her right to reign.

The lily's height bespoke command,
A fair imperial flow'r,
She seem'd design'd for Flora's hand,
The sceptre of her pow'r.

This civil bick'ring and debate
The goddess chanced to hear,
And flew to save, e'er yet too late,
The pride of the parterre.

Yours is, she said, the nobler hue
And yours the statelier mien,
And till a third surpasses you,
Let each be deem'd a queen.

Thus sooth'd and reconciled, each seeks
The fairest British fair,
The seat of empire is her cheeks,
They reign united there.

THE PINE-APPLE AND THE BEE.

THE pine-apples in triple row,
Were basking hot and all in blow.
A bee of most discerning taste
Perceived the fragrance as he pass'd,
On eager wing the spoiler came,
And search'd for crannies in the frame,

Urged his attempt on ev'ry side,
To ev'ry pane his trunk applied,
But still in vain, the frame was tight
And only pervious to the light.
Thus having wasted half the day,
He trimm'd his flight another way.
  Methinks, I said, in thee I find
The sin and madness of mankind ;
To joys forbidden man aspires,
Consumes his soul with vain desires ;
Folly the spring of his pursuit,
And disappointment all the fruit.
While Cynthio ogles as she passes
The nymph between two chariot-glasses,
She is the pine-apple, and he
The silly, unsuccessful bee.
The maid who views with pensive air
The show-glass fraught with glittering ware,
Sees watches, bracelets, rings, and lockets,
But sighs at thought of empty pockets,
Like thine her appetite is keen,
But, ah ! the cruel glass between !
  Our dear delights are often such,
Exposed to view but not to touch ;
The sight our foolish heart inflames,
We long for pine-apples in frames,
With hopeless wish one looks and lingers,
One breaks the glass and cuts his fingers ;
But they whom truth and wisdom lead,
Can gather honey from a weed.

ON A GOLDFINCH

STARVED TO DEATH IN HIS CAGE.

TIME was when I was free as air,
The thistle's downy seed my fare,
My drink the morning dew;
I perch'd at will on every spray,
My form genteel, my plumage gay,
My strains for ever new.

But gaudy plumage, sprightly strain,
And form genteel were all in vain,
And of a transient date;
For, caught and caged and starved to death,
In dying sighs my little breath
Soon pass'd the wiry grate.

Thanks, gentle swain, for all my woes,
And thanks for this effectual close
And cure of ev'ry ill!
More cruelty could none express,
And I, if you had shown me less,
Had been your prisoner still.

THE WINTER NOSEGAY.

WHAT Nature, alas! has denied
To the delicate growth of our isle,
Art has in a measure supplied,
And winter is deck'd with a smile.
See, Mary, what beauties I bring
From the shelter of that sunny shed,

Where the flow'rs have the charms of the spring,
Though abroad they are frozen and dead.

'Tis a bow'r of Arcadian sweets,
Where Flora is still in her prime,
A fortress to which she retreats,
From the cruel assaults of the climes.
While earth wears a mantle of snow,
These pinks are as fresh and as gay
As the fairest and sweetest that blow
On the beautiful bosom of May.

See how they have safely survived
The frowns of a sky so severe ;
Such Mary's true love, that has lived
Through many a turbulent year.
The charms of the late-blowing rose
Seem graced with a livelier hue,
And the winter of sorrow best shows
The truth of a friend, such as you.

MUTUAL FORBEARANCE

NECESSARY TO THE HAPPINESS OF THE MARRIED STATE.

THE lady thus address'd her spouse—
What a mere dungeon is this house !
By no means large enough ; and, was it,
Yet this dull room and that dark closet,
Those hangings with their worn-out graces,
Long beards, long noses, and pale faces,
Are such an antiquated scene,

They overwhelm me with the spleen.
—Sir Humphry, shooting in the dark,
Makes answer quite beside the mark:
No doubt, my dear, I bade him come,
Engaged myself to be at home,
And shall expect him at the door
Precisely when the clock strikes four.
  You are so deaf, the lady cried
(And raised her voice, and frown'd beside),
You are so sadly deaf, my dear,
What shall I do to make you hear?
Dismiss poor Harry! he replies,
Some people are more nice than wise,—
For one slight trespass all this stir?
What if he did ride, whip and spur,
'Twas but a mile—your fav'rite horse
Will never look one hair the worse.
Well, I protest 'tis past all bearing—
Child! I am rather hard of hearing—
Yes, truly—one must scream and bawl,
I tell you you can't hear at all;
Then, with a voice exceeding low,
No matter if you hear or no.
  Alas! and is domestic strife,
That sorest ill of human life,
A plague so little to be fear'd,
As to be wantonly incurr'd,
To gratify a fretful passion,
On ev'ry trivial provocation?
The kindest and the happiest pair
Will find occasion to forbear.
And something ev'ry day they live
To pity and, perhaps, forgive.
But if infirmities that fall
In common to the lot of all,

A blemish, or a sense impair'd,
Are crimes so little to be spared,
Then farewell all that must create
The comfort of the wedded state;
Instead of harmony, 'tis jar
And tumult, and intestine war.
  The love that cheers life's latest stage,
Proof against sickness and old age,
Preserved by virtue from declension,
Becomes not weary of attention,
But lives, when that exterior grace
Which first inspired the flame decays.
'Tis gentle, delicate, and kind,
To faults compassionate or blind,
And will with sympathy endure
Those evils it would gladly cure.
But angry, coarse, and harsh expression
Shows love to be a mere profession;
Proves that the heart is none of his,
Or soon expels him if it is.

TO THE REV. MR. NEWTON.

AN INVITATION INTO THE COUNTRY.

THE swallows in their torpid state,
  Compose their useless wing,
And bees in hives as idly wait
  The call of early spring.

The keenest frost that binds the stream,
  The wildest wind that blows,
Are neither felt nor fear'd by them,
  Secure of their repose.

But man all feeling and awake
The gloomy scene surveys,
With present ills his heart must ache,
And pant for brighter days.

Old Winter halting o'er the mead,
Bids me and Mary mourn,
But lovely Spring peeps o'er his head,
And whispers your return.

Then April, with her sister May,
Shall chase him from the bow'rs,
And weave fresh garlands ev'ry day,
To crown the smiling hours.

And if a tear that speaks regret
Of happier time appear,
A glimpse of joy that we have met
Shall shine and dry the tear.

BOADICEA:

AN ODE.

WHEN the British warrior queen,
Bleeding from the Roman rods,
Sought, with an indignant mien,
Counsel of her country's gods,

Sage beneath a spreading oak
Sat the Druid, hoary chief,
Ev'ry burning word he spoke,
Full of rage and full of grief.

Princess ! if our aged eyes
  Weep upon thy matchless wrongs,
'Tis because resentment ties
  All the terrors of our tongues.

Rome shall perish—write that word
  In the blood that she has spilt ;
Perish, hopeless and abhorr'd,
  Deep in ruin as in guilt.

Rome, for empire far renown'd,
  Tramples on a thousand states ;
Soon her pride shall kiss the ground—
  Hark ! the Gaul is at her gates.

Other Romans shall arise,
  Heedless of a soldier's name ;
Sounds, not arms, shall win the prize,
  Harmony the path to fame.

Then the progeny that springs
  From the forests of our land,
Arm'd with thunder, clad with wings,
  Shall a wider world command.

Regions Cæsar never knew
  Thy posterity shall sway,
Where his eagles never flew,
  None invincible as they.

Such the bard's prophetic words,
  Pregnant with celestial fire,
Bending as he swept the chords
  Of his sweet but awful lyre.

She, with all a monarch's pride,
  Felt them in her bosom glow,
Rush'd to battle, fought, and died;
  Dying, hurl'd them at the foe.

Ruffians, pitiless as proud,
  Heav'n awards the vengeance due;
Empire is on us bestow'd,
  Shame and ruin wait for you.

THE POET, THE OYSTER, AND SENSITIVE PLANT.

AN Oyster, cast upon the shore,
  Was heard, though never heard before,
Complaining in a speech well worded,
And worthy thus to be recorded:
  Ah, hapless wretch! condemn'd to dwell
For ever in my native shell,
Ordain'd to move when others please,
Not for my own content or ease;
But toss'd and buffeted about,
Now *in* the water, and now *out;*
'Twere better to be born a stone,
Of ruder shape and feeling none,
Than with a tenderness like mine,
And sensibilities so fine!
I envy that unfeeling shrub,
Fast-rooted against ev'ry rub.
The plant he meant grew not far off,
And felt the sneer with scorn enough;
Was hurt, disgusted, mortified,
And with asperity replied.

When, cry the botanists, and stare,
Did plants call'd sensitive grow there ?
No matter when—a poet's muse is
To make them grow just where she chooses.
You shapeless nothing in a dish,
You that are but almost a fish,
I scorn your coarse insinuation,
And have most plentiful occasion
To wish myself the rock I view,
Or such another dolt as you.
For many a grave and learned clerk,
And many a gay unletter'd spark,
With curious touch examines me,
If I can feel as well as he ;
And when I bend, retire, and shrink,
Says—Well, 'tis more than one would think—
Thus life is spent (oh, fie upon't !)
In being touch'd, and crying—Don't !
A poet, in his evening walk,
O'erheard and check'd this idle talk :
And your fine sense, he said, and yours,
Whatever evil it endures,
Deserves not, if so soon offended,
Much to be pitied or commended.
Disputes, though short, are far too long,
Where both alike are in the wrong ;
Your feelings, in their full amount,
Are all upon your own account.
You in your grotto-work enclosed,
Complain of being thus exposed ;
Yet nothing feel in that rough coat,
Save when the knife is at your throat,
Wherever driven by wind or tide,
Exempt from every ill beside.
And as for you, my Lady Squeamish,

Who reckon ev'ry touch a blemish,
If all the plants that can be found
Embellishing the scene around,
Should droop and wither where they grow,
You would not feel at all, not you.
The noblest minds their virtue prove
By pity, sympathy, and love;
These—these are feelings truly fine,
And prove their owner half divine.
His censure reach'd them as he dealt it,
And each by shrinking show'd he felt it.

TO THE REV. WILLIAM CAWTHORNE UNWIN.

UNWIN, I should but ill repay
The kindness of a friend,
Whose worth deserves as warm a lay
As ever friendship penn'd,
Thy name omitted in a page
That would reclaim a vicious age.

An union form'd, as mine with thee,
Not rashly or in sport,
May be as fervent in degree,
And faithful in its sort,
And may as rich in comfort prove,
As that of true fraternal love.

The bud, inserted in the rind,
The bud of peach or rose,
Adorns, though diff'ring in its kind,
The stock whereon it grows,
With flow'r as sweet, or fruit as fair,
As if produced by nature there.

Not rich, I render what I may—
I seize thy name in haste,
And place it in this first essay,
Lest this should prove the last.
'Tis where it should be, in a plan
That holds in view the good of man.

The poet's lyre, to fix his fame,
Should be the poet's heart,
Affection lights a brighter flame
Than ever blazed by art.
No muses on these lines attend,
I sink the poet in the friend.

THE TASK.

BOOK I.—THE SOFA.

["The history of the following production is briefly this: A lady, fond of blank verse, demanded a poem of that kind from the author, and gave him the SOFA for a subject. He obeyed, and having much leisure, connected another subject with it; and, pursuing the train of thought to which his situation and turn of mind led him, brought forth, at length, instead of the trifle which he at first intended, a serious affair—a Volume." Such was the short and graceful introduction to *The Task.*]

I SING the Sofa. I, who lately sang
Truth, Hope, and Charity, and touch'd with awe
The solemn chords, and with a trembling hand,
Escaped with pain from that advent'rous flight,
Now seek repose upon a humbler theme;
The theme though humble, yet august and proud
Th' occasion—for the Fair commands the song.

Long time elapsed or e'er our rugged sires
Complain'd, though incommodiously pent in,
And ill at ease behind. The ladies first
'Gan murmur, as became the softer sex.
Ingenious fancy, never better pleased
Than when employ'd t' accommodate the fair,
Heard the sweet moan with pity, and devised
The soft settee; one elbow at each end,
And in the midst an elbow it received,
United yet divided, twain at once.
So sit two Kings of Brentford on one throne;
And so two citizens who take the air,
Close pack'd and smiling in a chaise and one.
But relaxation of the languid frame
By soft recumbency of outstretched limbs,
Was bliss reserved for happier days; so slow
The growth of what is excellent, so hard
T' attain perfection in this nether world.
Thus, first necessity invented stools,
Convenience next suggested elbow-chairs,
And luxury th' accomplished Sofa last.
The nurse sleeps sweetly, hired to watch the sick
Whom snoring she disturbs. As sweetly he
Who quits the coach-box at the midnight hour
To sleep within the carriage more secure,
His legs depending at the open door.
Sweet sleep enjoys the Curate in his desk,
The tedious Rector drawling o'er his head,
And sweet the Clerk below: but neither sleep
Of lazy Nurse, who snores the sick man dead,
Nor his who quits the box at midnight hour
To slumber in the carriage more secure,
Nor sleep enjoy'd by Curate in his desk,
Nor yet the dozings of the Clerk, are sweet,
Compared with the repose the SOFA yields.

Oh, may I live exempted (while I live
Guiltless of pamper'd appetite obscene),
From pangs arthritic that infest the toe
Of libertine excess. The SOFA suits
The gouty limb, 'tis true; but gouty limb,
Though on a SOFA, may I never feel:
For I have loved the rural walk through lanes,
Of grassy swarth, close cropp'd by nibbling sheep,
And skirted thick with intertexture firm
Of thorny boughs: have loved the rural walk
O'er hills, through valleys, and by river's brink,
E'er since a truant boy I pass'd my bounds
T' enjoy a ramble on the banks of Thames.
And still remember, nor without regret,
Of hours that sorrow since has much endear'd,
How oft, my slice of pocket store consumed,
Still hung'ring, pennyless, and far from home,
I feed on scarlet hips and stony haws,
Or blushing crabs, or berries that imboss
The bramble, black as jet, or sloes austere.
Hard fare! but such a boyish appetite
Disdains not, nor the palate undepraved
By culinary arts unsav'ry deems.
No SOFA then awaited my return,
No SOFA then I needed. Youth repairs
His wasted spirits quickly, by long toil
Incurring short fatigue; and though our years,
As life declines, speed rapidly away,
And not a year but pilfers as he goes
Some youthful grace that age would gladly keep,
A tooth or auburn lock, and by degrees
Their length and colour from the locks they spare;
Th' elastic spring of an unwearied foot
That mounts the stile with ease, or leaps the fence,
That play of lungs inhaling and again

Respiring freely the fresh air, that makes
Swift pace or steep ascent no toil to me,
Mine have not pilfer'd yet; nor yet impair'd
My relish of fair prospect; scenes that sooth'd
Or charm'd me young, no longer young, I find
Still soothing and of power to charm me still.
  Nor rural sights alone, but rural sounds
Exhilarate the spirit, and restore
The tone of languid Nature. Mighty winds
That sweep the skirt of some far-spreading wood
Of ancient growth, make music not unlike
The dash of ocean on his winding shore,
And lull the spirit while they fill the mind,
Unnumber'd branches waving in the blast,
And all their leaves fast flutt'ring, all at once.
Nor less composure waits upon the roar
Of distant floods, or on the softer voice
Of neighb'ring fountain, or of rills that slip
Through the cleft rock, and, chiming as they fall
Upon loose pebbles, lose themselves at length
In matted grass, that with a livelier green
Betrays the secret of their silent course.
Nature inanimate employs sweet sounds,
But animated Nature sweeter still
To soothe and satisfy the human ear.
Ten thousand warblers cheer the day, and one
The livelong night: nor these alone whose notes
Nice-finger'd art must emulate in vain,
But cawing rooks, and kites that swim sublime
In still repeated circles, screaming loud,
The jay, the pie, and ev'n the boding owl
That hails the rising moon, have charms for me.
Sounds inharmonious in themselves and harsh,
Yet heard in scenes where peace for ever reigns,
And only there, please highly for their sake.

He does not scorn it, who, imprison'd long
In some unwholesome dungeon, and a prey
To sallow sickness, which the vapours dank
And clammy of his dark abode have bred,
Escapes at last to liberty and light;
His cheek recovers soon its healthful hue,
His eye relumines its extinguish'd fires,
He walks, he leaps, he runs—is wing'd with joy,
And riots in the sweets of ev'ry breeze.
He does not scorn it, who has long endured
A fever's agonies, and fed on drugs.
Nor yet the mariner, his blood inflamed
With acrid salts; his very heart athirst
To gaze at Nature in her green array.
Upon the ship's tall side he stands, possess'd
With visions prompted by intense desire;
Fair fields appear below, such as he left
Far distant, such as he would die to find—
He seeks them headlong, and is seen no more.
The spleen is seldom felt where Flora reigns;
The low'ring eye, the petulance, the frown,
And sullen sadness that o'ershade, distort,
And mar the face of beauty, when no cause
For such immeasurable woe appears,
These Flora banishes, and gives the fair
Sweet smiles, and bloom less transient than her own.
It is the constant revolution, stale
And tasteless, of the same repeated joys,
That palls and satiates, and makes languid life
A pedler's pack, that bows the bearer down.
Health suffers, and the spirits ebb; the heart
Recoils from its own choice—at the full feast
Is famish'd—finds no music in the song,
No smartness in the jest, and wonders why.

Yet thousands still desire to journey on,
Though halt and weary of the path they tread.
The paralytic, who can hold her cards
But cannot play them, borrows a friend's hand
To deal and shuffle, to divide and sort
Her mingled suits and sequences, and sits
Spectatress both and spectacle, a sad
And silent cipher, while her proxy plays.
Others are dragg'd into the crowded room
Between supporters; and once seated, sit
Through downright inability to rise,
Till the stout bearers lift the corpse again.
These speak a loud memento. Yet ev'n these
Themselves love life, and cling to it as he
That overhangs a torrent, to a twig.
They love it, and yet loathe it; fear to die,
Yet scorn the purposes for which they live.
Then wherefore not renounce them? No—the dread,
The slavish dread of solitude, that breeds
Reflection and remorse, the fear of shame,
And their invet'rate habits, all forbid.
Whom call we gay? That honour has been long
The boast of mere pretenders to the name.
The innocent are gay—the lark is gay,
That dries his feathers saturate with dew
Beneath the rosy cloud, while yet the beams
Of day-spring overshoot his humble nest.
The peasant too, a witness of his song,
Himself a songster, is as gay as he.
But save me from the gaiety of those
Whose headaches nail them to a noonday bed;
And save me, too, from theirs whose haggard eyes
Flash desperation, and betray their pangs
For property stripp'd off by cruel chance:

From gaiety that fills the bones with pain,
The mouth with blasphemy, the heart with woe.
The earth was made so various, that the mind
Of desultory man, studious of change,
And pleased with novelty might be indulged.
Prospects however lovely may be seen
Till half their beauties fade ; the weary sight,
Too well acquainted with their smiles, slides off
Fastidious, seeking less familiar scenes.
Then snug enclosures in the shelter'd vale,
Where frequent hedges intercept the eye,
Delight us, happy to renounce a while,
Not senseless of its charms, what still we love,
That such short absence may endear it more.
Blest he, though undistinguish'd from the crowd
By wealth or dignity, who dwells secure
Where man, by nature fierce, has laid aside
His fierceness, having learnt, though slow to learn,
The manners and the arts of civil life.
His wants, indeed, are many ; but supply
Is obvious ; placed within the easy reach
Of temp'rate wishes and industrious hands.
Here virtue thrives as in her proper soil ;
Not rude and surly, and beset with thorns,
And terrible to sight, as when she springs
(If e'er she spring spontaneous) in remote
And barb'rous climes, where violence prevails,
And strength is lord of all ; but gentle, kind,
By culture tamed, by liberty refresh'd,
And all her fruits by radiant truth matured.
War and the chase engross the savage whole ;
War follow'd for revenge, or to supplant
The envied tenants of some happier spot ;
The chase for sustenance, precarious trust !
His hard condition with severe constraint

Binds all his faculties, forbids all growth
Of wisdom, proves a school in which he learns
Sly circumvention, unrelenting hate,
Mean self-attachment, and scarce aught beside.
Thus fare the shiv'ring natives of the north,
And thus the rangers of the western world,
Where it advances far into the deep,
Towards th' Antartic. Ev'n the favour'd isles,
So lately found, although the constant sun
Cheer all their seasons with a grateful smile,
Can boast but little virtue; and inert
Through plenty, lose in morals what they gain
In manners, victims of luxurious ease.
These therefore I can pity, placed remote
From all that science traces, art invents,
Or inspiration teaches; and enclosed
In boundless oceans, never to be pass'd
By navigators uninform'd as they,
Or plough'd perhaps by British bark again.
But though true worth and virtue, in the mild
And genial soil of cultivated life
Thrive most, and may perhaps thrive only there,
Yet not in cities oft. In proud and gay
And gain-devoted cities; thither flow,
As to a common and most noisome sewer,
The dregs and feculence of ev'ry land.
In cities, foul example on most minds
Begets its likeness. Rank abundance breeds
In gross and pamper'd cities sloth and lust,
And wantonness and gluttonous excess.
In cities, vice is hidden with most ease,
Or seen with least reproach; and virtue, taught
By frequent lapse, can hope no triumph there,
Beyond th' achievement of successful flight.
I do confess them nurs'ries of the arts,

In which they flourish most; where, in the beams
Of warm encouragement, and in the eye
Of public note, they reach their perfect size.
Such London is, by taste and wealth proclaim'd
The fairest capital in all the world,
By riot and incontinence the worst.
There, touch'd by Reynolds, a dull blank becomes
A lucid mirror, in which Nature sees
All her reflected features. Bacon there
Gives more than female beauty to a stone,
And Chatham's eloquence to marble lips.
Nor does the chisel occupy alone
The pow'rs of sculpture, but the style as much;
Each province of her art her equal care.
With nice incision of her guided steel
She ploughs a brazen field, and clothes a soil
So sterile with what charms soe'er she will,
The richest scen'ry and the loveliest forms.
Where finds philosophy her eagle eye,
With which she gazes at yon burning disk
Undazzled, and detects and counts his spots?
In London. Where her implements exact,
With which she calculates, computes, and scans
All distance, motion, magnitude, and now
Measures an atom, and now girds a world?
In London. Where has commerce such a mart,
So rich, so throng'd, so drain'd, and so supplied,
As London, opulent, enlarged, and still
Increasing London? Babylon of old
Not more the glory of the earth, than she
A more accomplish'd world's chief glory now.
She has her praise. Now mark a spot or two
That so much beauty would do well to purge;
And show this queen of cities, that so fair
May yet be foul; so witty, yet not wise.

It is not seemly, nor of good report,
That she is slack in discipline ; more prompt
T' avenge than to prevent the breach of law :
That she is rigid in denouncing death
On petty robbers, and indulges life
And liberty, and ofttimes honour too,
To peculators of the public gold :
That thieves at home must hang ; but he, that puts
Into his overgorged and bloated purse
The wealth of Indian provinces, escapes.
Nor is it well, nor can it come to good,
That through profane and infidel contempt
Of holy writ, she has presumed t' annul
And abrogate, as roundly as she may,
The total ordinance and will of God.
God made the country, and man made the town.
What wonder, then, that health and virtue, gifts
That can alone make sweet the bitter draught
That life holds out to all, should most abound
And least be threatened in the fields and groves ?
Possess ye therefore, ye who, borne about
In chariots and sedans, know no fatigue
But that of idleness, and taste no scenes
But such as art contrives, possess ye still
Your element ; there only ye can shine,
There only minds like yours can do no harm.
Our groves were planted to console at noon
The pensive wand'rer in their shades. At eve
The moonbeam, sliding softly in between
The sleeping leaves, is all the light they wish,
Birds warbling all the music. We can spare
The splendour of your lamps, they but eclipse
Our softer satellite. Your songs confound
Our more harmonious notes. The thrush departs
Scared, and th' offended nightingale is mute.

There is a public mischief in your mirth ;
It plagues your country. Folly such as yours,
Graced with a sword, and worthier of a fan,
Has made, which enemies could ne'er have done,
Our arch of empire, steadfast but for you,
A mutilated structure, soon to fall.

BOOK II.—THE TIMEPIECE.

Oh for a lodge in some vast wilderness,
Some boundless contiguity of shade,
Where rumour of oppression and deceit,
Of unsuccessful or successful war,
Might never reach me more ! My ear is pain'd,
My soul is sick with ev'ry day's report
Of wrong and outrage with which earth is fill'd.
There is no flesh in man's obdurate heart,
It does not feel for man. The nat'ral bond
Of brotherhood is sever'd as the flax,
That falls asunder at the touch of fire.
He finds his fellow guilty of a skin
Not colour'd like his own, and having pow'r
T' enforce the wrong, for such a worthy cause
Dooms and devotes him as his lawful prey.
Lands intersected by a narrow frith
Abhor each other. Mountains interposed
Make enemies of nations, who had else,
Like kindred drops, been mingled into one.
Thus man devotes his brother, and destroys ;
And worse than all, and most to be deplored,
As human nature's broadest, foulest blot,
Chains him, and tasks him, and exacts his sweat
With stripes, that mercy, with a bleeding heart,

Weeps when she sees inflicted on a beast.
Then what is man? And what man, seeing this,
And having human feelings, does not blush
And hang his head, to think himself a man?
I would not have a slave to till my ground,
To carry me, to fan me while I sleep,
And tremble when I wake, for all the wealth
That sinews bought and sold have ever earn'd.
No: dear as freedom is, and in my heart's
Just estimation prized above all price,
I had much rather be myself the slave
And wear the bonds, than fasten them on him.
We have no slaves at home—then why abroad?
And they themselves, once ferried o'er the wave
That parts us, are emancipate and loosed.
Slaves cannot breathe in England; if their lungs
Receive our air, that moment they are free,
They touch our country and their shackles fall.
That's noble, and bespeaks a nation proud
And jealous of the blessing. Spread it then,
And let it circulate through ev'ry vein
Of all your empire; that where Britain's power
Is felt, mankind may feel her mercy too.
England, with all thy faults, I love thee still—
My country! and while yet a nook is left,
Where English minds and manners may be found,
Shall be constrain'd to love thee. Though thy clime
Be fickle, and thy year most part deform'd
With dripping rains, or wither'd by a frost,
I would not yet exchange thy sullen skies
And fields without a flow'r, for warmer France
With all her vines; nor for Ausonia's groves
Of golden fruitage, and her myrtle bow'rs.
To shake thy senate, and from heights sublime

Of patriot eloquence to flash down fire
Upon thy foes, was never meant my task ;
But I can feel thy fortunes, and partake
Thy joys and sorrows with as true a heart
As any thund'rer there. And I can feel
Thy follies too, and with a just disdain
Frown at effeminates, whose very looks
Reflect dishonour on the land I love.
  There is a pleasure in poetic pains
Which only poets know. The shifts and turns,
Th' expedients and inventions multiform
To which the mind resorts, in chase of terms
Though apt, yet coy, and difficult to win—
T' arrest the fleeting images that fill
The mirror of the mind, and hold them fast,
And force them sit, till he has pencill'd off
A faithful likeness of the forms he views ;
Then to dispose his copies with such art
That each may find its most propitious light,
And shine by situation, hardly less
Than by the labour and the skill it cost,
Are occupations of the poet's mind
So pleasing, and that steal away the thought
With such address from themes of sad import,
That, lost in his own musings, happy man !
He feels th' anxieties of life, denied
Their wonted entertainment, all retire.
Such joys has he that sings. But ah ! not such,
Or seldom such, the hearers of his song.
Fastidious, or else listless, or perhaps
Aware of nothing arduous in a task
They never undertook, they little note
His dangers or escapes, and haply find
There least amusement where he found the most.
But is amusement all ? studious of song,

And yet ambitious not to sing in vain,
I would not trifle merely, though the world
Be loudest in their praise who do no more.
Yet what can satire, whether grave or gay?
It may correct a foible, may chastise
The freaks of fashion, regulate the dress,
Retrench a sword-blade, or displace a patch;
But where are its sublimer trophies found?
What vice has it subdued? whose heart reclaim'd
By rigour, or whom laugh'd into reform?
Alas! Leviathan is not so tamed.
Laugh'd at, he laughs again; and, stricken hard
Turns to the stroke his adamantine scales,
That fear no discipline of human hands.
The pulpit therefore (and I name it, fill'd
With solemn awe, that bids me well beware
With what intent I touch that holy thing)—
The pulpit (when the sat'rist has at last,
Strutting and vap'ring in an empty school,
Spent all his force, and made no proselyte)—
I say the pulpit (in the sober use
Of its legitimate peculiar pow'rs)
Must stand acknowledg'd, while the world shall stand
The most important and effectual guard,
Support and ornament of virtue's cause.
There stands the messenger of truth: there stands
The legate of the skies; his theme divine,
His office sacred, his credentials clear.
By him, the violated law speaks out
Its thunders, and by him, in strains as sweet
As angels use, the Gospel whispers peace.
He stablishes the strong, restores the weak,
Reclaims the wand'rer, binds the broken heart,
And, armed himself in panoply complete

Of heav'nly temper, furnishes with arms
Bright as his own, and trains, by ev'ry rule
Of holy disipline, to glorious war,
The sacramental host of God's elect.
Are all such teachers? would to heav'n all were!
But hark—the Doctor's voice—fast wedged between
Two empirics he stands, and with swoln cheeks
Inspires the news, his trumpet. Keener far
Than all invective is his bold harangue,
While through that public organ of report
He hails the clergy; and, defying shame,
Announces to the world his own and theirs.
He teaches those to read, whom schools dismiss'd,
And colleges, untaught, sells accent, tone,
And emphasis in score, and gives to pray'r
Th' *adagio* and *andante* it demands.
He grinds divinity of other days
Down into modern use; transforms old print
To zigzag manuscript, and cheats the eyes
Of gall'ry critics by a thousand arts.—
Are there who purchase of the Doctor's ware?
Oh name it not in Gath!—it cannot be,
That grave and learned Clerks should need such aid.
He doubtless is in sport, and does but droll,
Assuming thus a rank unknown before,
Grand caterer and dry-nurse of the church.
  Would I describe a preacher, such as Paul,
Were he on earth, would hear, approve, and own,
Paul should himself direct me. I would trace
His master-strokes, and draw from his design.
I would express him simple, grave, sincere;
In doctrine uncorrupt; in language plain,
And plain in manner; decent, solemn, chaste,
And natural in gesture; much impress'd

Himself, as conscious of his awful charge,
And anxious mainly that the flock he feeds
May feel it to; affectionate in look
And tender in address, as well becomes
A messenger of grace to guilty men.
Behold the picture!—Is it like?—Like whom?
The things that mount the rostrum with a skip,
And then skip down again; pronounce a text,
Cry—Hem; and reading what they never wrote,
Just fifteen minutes, huddle up their work,
And with a well-bred whisper close the scene.
  He that negotiates between God and man,
As God's ambassador, the grand concerns
Of judgment and of mercy, should beware
Of lightness in his speech. 'Tis pitiful
To court a grin, when you should woo a soul;
To break a jest, when pity would inspire
Pathetic exhortation; and t' address
The skittish fancy with facetious tales,
When sent with God's commission to the heart.
So did not Paul. Direct me to a quip
Or merry turn in all he ever wrote,
And I consent you take it for your text,
Your only one, till sides and benches fail.
No: he was serious in a serious cause,
And understood too well the weighty terms
That he had ta'en in charge. He would not stoop
To conquer those by jocular exploits,
Whom truth and soberness assail'd in vain.
  Oh, popular applause! what heart of man
Is proof against thy sweet seducing charms?
The wisest and the best feel urgent need
Of all their caution in thy gentlest gales;
But swell'd into a gust—who then, alas!
With all his canvas set, and inexpert,

And therefore heedless, can withstand thy power?
Praise from the rivel'd lips of toothless, bald
Decrepitude, and in the looks of lean
And craving poverty, and in the bow
Respectful of the smutch'd artificer,
Is oft too welcome, and may much disturb
The bias of the purpose. How much more,
Pour'd forth by beauty splendid and polite,
In language soft as adoration breathes?
Ah, spare your idol! think him human still:
Charms he may have, but he has frailties too,
Dote not too much, nor spoil what ye admire.
And thus it is. The pastor, either vain
By nature, or by flattery made so, taught
To gaze at his own splendour, and t' exalt
Absurdly, not his office, but himself;
Or unenlighten'd, and too proud to learn,
Or vicious, and not therefore apt to teach,
Perverting often, by the stress of lewd
And loose example, whom he should instruct,
Exposes and holds up to broad disgrace
The noblest function, and discredits much
The brightest truths that man has ever seen.
For ghostly counsel, if it either fall
Below the exigence, or be not back'd
With show of love, at least with hopeful proof
Of some sincerity on the giver's part;
Or be dishonour'd in th' exterior form
And mode of its conveyance, by such tricks
As move derision, or by foppish airs
And histrionic mumm'ry, that let down
The pulpit to the level of the stage:
Drops from the lips a disregarded thing.
The weak perhaps are moved, but are not taught,
While prejudice in men of stronger minds

Takes deeper root, confirm'd by what they see.
A relaxation of religion's hold
Upon the roving and untutor'd heart
Soon follows, and the curb of conscience snapt,
The laity run wild.—But do they now?
Note their extravagance, and be convinced.
  In colleges and halls, in ancient days,
When learning, virtue, piety, and truth
Were precious, and inculcated with care,
There dwelt a sage call'd Discipline. His head,
Not yet by time completely silver'd o'er,
Bespoke him past the bounds of freakish youth,
But strong for service still, and unimpair'd.
His eye was meek and gentle, and a smile
Play'd on his lips, and in his speech was heard
Paternal sweetness, dignity, and love.
The occupation dearest to his heart
Was to encourage goodness. He would stroke
The head of modest and ingenuous worth,
That blush'd at his own praise, and press the youth
Close to his side that pleased him. Learning grew
Beneath his care, a thriving, vig'rous plant;
The mind was well inform'd, the passions held
Subordinate, and diligence was choice.
If e'er it chanced, as sometimes chance it must,
That one among so many overleap'd
The limits of control, his gentle eye
Grew stern, and darted a severe rebuke;
His frown was full of terror, and his voice
Shook the delinquent with such fits of awe
As left him not, till penitence had won
Lost favour back again, and closed the breach.
But Discipline, a faithful servant long,
Declined at length into the vale of years;
A palsy struck his arm, his sparkling eye

Was quench'd in rheums of age, his voice unstrung
Grew tremulous, and moved derision more
Than rev'rence in perverse, rebellious youth.
So colleges and halls neglected much
Their good old friend, and Discipline at length,
O'erlook'd and unemploy'd, fell sick and died.
Then study languish'd, emulation slept,
And virtue fled. The schools became a scene
Of solemn farce, where ignorance in stilts,
His cap well lined with logic not his own,
With parrot tongue perform'd the scholar's part,
Proceeding soon a graduated dunce.
Then compromise had place, and scrutiny
Became stone-blind, precedence went in truck,
And he was competent whose purse was so.
A dissolution of all bonds ensued,
The curbs invented for the mulish mouth
Of headstrong youth were broken ; bars and bolts
Grew rusty by disuse, and massy gates
Forgot their office, op'ning with a touch ;
Till gowns at length are found mere masquerade ;
The tassell'd cap and the spruce band a jest,
A mock'ry of the world. What need of these
For gamesters, jockeys, brothellers impure,
Spendthrifts and booted sportsmen, oft'ner seen
With belted waist, and pointers at their heels,
Than in the bounds of duty? What was learn'd,
If aught was learn'd in childhood, is forgot,
And such expense, as pinches parents blue,
And mortifies the lib'ral hand of love,
Is squander'd in pursuit of idle sports
And vicious pleasures ; buys the boy a name,
That sits a stigma on his father's house,
And cleaves through life inseparably close
To him that wears it. What can after-games

Of riper joys, and commerce with the world,
The lewd vain world that must receive him soon,
Add to such erudition thus acquired,
Where science and where virtue are profess'd!
  All are not such. I had a brother once—
Peace to the mem'ry of a man of worth.
A man of letters and of manners too—
Of manners sweet as virtue always wears,
When gay good-nature dresses her in smiles.
He graced a college, in which order yet
Was sacred, and was honour'd, loved, and wept,
By more than one, themselves conspicuous there.
Some minds are temper'd happily, and mixt
With such ingredients of good sense and taste
Of what is excellent in man, they thirst
With such a zeal to be what they approve,
That no restraints can circumscribe them more,
Than they themselves by choice, for wisdom's sake;
Nor can example hurt them. What they see
Of vice in others but enhancing more
The charms of virtue in their just esteem.
If such escape contagion, and emerge
Pure, from so foul a pool, to shine abroad,
And give the world their talents and themselves,
Small thanks to those whose negligence or sloth
Exposed their inexperience to the snare,
And left them to an undirected choice.
  See then! the quiver broken and decay'd,
In which are kept our arrows. Rusting there
In wild disorder and unfit for use,
What wonder if discharged into the world
They shame their shooters with a random flight,
Their points obtuse, and feathers drunk with wine.
Well may the church wage unsuccessful war
With such artill'ry arm'd. Vice parries wide

Th' undreaded volley with a sword of straw,
And stands an impudent and fearless mark.
  Have we not track'd the felon home, and found
His birthplace and his dam? The country mourns—
Mourns, because ev'ry plague that can infest
Society, and that saps and worms the base
Of th' edifice that Policy has raised,
Swarms in all quarters; meets the eye, the ear,
And suffocates the breath at ev'ry turn.
Profusion breeds them. And the cause itself
Of that calamitous mischief has been found,
Found too where most offensive, in the skirts
Of the robed pedagogue! Else, let th' arraign'd
Stand up unconscious and refute the charge.
So, when the Jewish Leader stretch'd his arm
And waved his rod divine, a race obscene,
Spawn'd in the muddy beds of Nile, came forth,
Polluting Egypt. Gardens, fields, and plains
Were cover'd with the pest. The streets were fill'd;
The croaking nuisance lurk'd in ev'ry nook,
Nor palaces nor even chambers 'scaped,
And the land stank, so num'rous was the fry.

BOOK III.—THE GARDEN.

As one who, long in thickets and in brakes
Entangled, winds now this way and now that,
His devious course uncertain, seeking home;
Or, having long in miry ways been foil'd
And sore discomfited, from slough to slough
Plunging, and half-despairing of escape,
If chance at length he find a greensward smooth
And faithful to the foot, his spirits rise,
He chirrups brisk his ear-erecting steed,
And winds his way with pleasure and with ease;

So I, designing other themes, and call'd
T' adorn the Sofa with eulogium due,
To tell its slumbers and to paint its dreams,
Have rambled wide. In country, city, seat
Of academic fame (howe'er deserved)
Long held, and scarcely disengaged at last.
But now with pleasant pace, a cleanlier road
I mean to tread. I feel myself at large,
Courageous, and refresh'd for future toil,
If toil await me, or if dangers new.
Since pulpits fail, and sounding-boards reflect
Most part an empty ineffectual sound,
What chance that I, to fame so little known,
Nor conversant with men or manners much,
Should speak to purpose, or with better hope
Crack the satiric thong? 'Twere wiser far
For me, enamour'd of sequester'd scenes,
And charm'd with rural beauty, to repose,
Where chance may throw me, beneath elm or vine,
My languid limbs, when summer sears the plains;
Or when rough winter rages, on the soft
And shelter'd Sofa, while the nitrous air
Feeds a blue flame and makes a cheerful hearth;
There, undisturb'd by folly, and apprised
How great the danger of disturbing her,
To muse in silence, or at least confine
Remarks that gall so many to the few,
My partners in retreat. Disgust conceal'd
Is ofttimes proof of wisdom, when the fault
Is obstinate, and cure beyond our reach.
'Twere well, says one sage erudite, profound,
Terribly arch'd and aquiline his nose,
And overbuilt with most impending brows,
'Twere well could you permit the world to live
As the world pleases. What's the world to you?—

Much. I was born of woman, and drew milk
As sweet as charity from human breasts.
I think, articulate, I laugh and weep,
And exercise all functions of a man.
How then should I and any man that lives
Be strangers to each other? Pierce my vein,
Take of the crimson stream meand'ring there,
And catechise it well. Apply your glass,
Search it, and prove now if it be not blood
Congenial with thine own; and if it be,
What edge of subtlety canst thou suppose
Keen enough, wise and skilful as thou art,
To cut the link of brotherhood, by which
One common Maker bound me to the kind?
True; I am no proficient, I confess,
In arts like yours. I cannot call the swift
And perilous lightnings from the angry clouds,
And bid them hide themselves in th' earth beneath;
I cannot analyse the air, nor catch
The parallax of yonder luminous point
That seems half quench'd in the immense abyss:
Such pow'rs I boast not—neither can I rest
A silent witness of the headlong rage,
Or heedless folly by which thousands die,
Bone of my bone, and kindred souls to mine.
God never meant that man should scale the heav'ns
By strides of human wisdom. In His works,
Though wondrous, He commands us in His Word
To seek Him rather where His mercy shines.
The mind indeed, enlighten'd from above,
Views Him in all; ascribes to the grand cause
The grand effect; acknowledges with joy
His manner, and with rapture tastes His style.
But never yet did philosophic tube,

That brings the planets home into the eye
Of observation, and discovers, else
Not visible, his family of worlds,
Discover Him that rules them ; such a veil
Hangs over mortal eyes, blind from the birth,
And dark in things divine. Full often too
Our wayward intellect, the more we learn
Of nature, overlooks her Author more ;
From instrumental causes proud to draw
Conclusions retrograde, and mad mistake.
But if His Word once teach us, shoot a ray
Through all the heart's dark chambers, and reveal
Truths undiscern'd but by that holy light,
Then all is plain. Philosophy, baptised
In the pure fountain of eternal love,
Has eyes indeed ; and, viewing all she sees
As meant to indicate a God to man,
Gives *Him* His praise, and forfeits not her own.
Learning has borne such fruit in other days
On all her branches. Piety has found
Friends in the friends of science, and true pray'r
Has flow'd from lips wet with Castalian dews.
Such was thy wisdom, Newton, childlike sage !
Sagacious reader of the works of God,
And in His word sagacious. Such too thine,
Milton, whose genius had angelic wings,
And fed on manna. And such thine, in whom
Our British Themis gloried with just cause,
Immortal Hale ! for deep discernment praised,
And sound integrity not more, than famed
For sanctity of manners undefiled.

How various his employments, whom the world
Calls idle, and who justly in return
Esteems that busy world an idler, too !
Friends, books, a garden, and perhaps his pen,

Delightful industry enjoy'd at home,
And nature in her cultivated trim
Dress'd to his taste, inviting him abroad—
Can he want occupation who has these?
Will he be idle who has much t' enjoy?
Me, therefore, studious of laborious ease,
Not slothful; happy to deceive the time,
Not waste it: and aware that human life
Is but a loan to be repaid with use,
When He shall call his debtors to account,
From whom are all our blessings; bus'ness finds
Ev'n here: while sedulous I seek t' improve,
At least neglect not, nor leave unemploy'd
The mind He gave me; driving it, though slack,
Too oft, and much impeded in its work
By causes not to be divulged in vain,
To its just point—the service of mankind,
He that attends to his interior self,
That has a heart and keeps it; has a mind
That hungers and supplies it; and who seeks
A social, not a dissipated life,
Has business; feels himself engaged t' achieve
No unimportant, though a silent task.
A life, all turbulence and noise, may seem
To him that leads it, wise and to be praised;
But wisdom is a pearl with most success
Sought in still water, and beneath clear skies.
He that is ever occupied in storms,
Or dives not for it, or brings up instead,
Vainly industrious, a disgraceful prize.
  The morning finds the self-sequester'd man
Fresh for his task, intend what task he may.
Whether inclement seasons recommend
His warm but simple home, where he enjoys,
With her who shares his pleasures and his heart,

Sweet converse, sipping calm the fragrant lymph
Which neatly she prepares; then to his book
Well chosen, and not sullenly perused
In selfish silence, but imparted oft
As aught occurs that she may smile to hear,
Or turn to nourishment digested well.
Or if the garden with its many cares,
All well repaid, demand him, he attends
The welcome call, conscious how much the hand
Of lubbard labour needs his watchful eye,
Oft loit'ring lazily if not o'erseen,
Or misapplying his unskilful strength.
Nor does he govern only or direct,
But much performs himself: no works indeed
That ask robust tough sinews, bred to toil,
Servile employ—but such as may amuse,
Not tire, demanding rather skill than force.
Proud of his well-spread walls, he views his trees
That meet (no barren interval between)
With pleasure more than ev'n their fruits afford,
Which, save himself who trains them, none can feel.
These therefore are his own peculiar charge,
No meaner hand may discipline the shoots,
None but his steel approach them. What is weak,
Distemper'd, or has lost prolific pow'rs,
Impair'd by age, his unrelenting hand
Dooms to the knife. Nor does he spare the soft
And succulent that feeds its giant growth,
But barren, at th' expense of neigb'ring twigs
Less ostentatious, and yet studded thick
With hopeful gems. The rest, no portion left
That may disgrace his art, or disappoint
Large expectation, he disposes neat
At measured distances, that air and sun
Admitted freely may afford their aid,

And ventilate and warm the swelling buds.
Hence Summer has her riches, Autumn hence,
And hence ev'n Winter fills his wither'd hand
With blushing fruits, and plenty not his own.
Fair recompense of labour well bestow'd
And wise precaution, which a clime so rude
Makes needful still, whose Spring is but the child
Of churlish Winter, in her froward moods
Discov'ring much the temper of her sire.
For oft, as if in her the stream of mild
Maternal nature had reversed its course,
She brings her infants forth with many smiles,
But, once deliver'd, kills them with a frown.
He therefore, timely warn'd, himself supplies
Her want of care, screening and keeping warm
The plenteous bloom, that no rough blast may sweep
His garlands from the boughs. Again, as oft
As the sun peeps and vernal airs breathe mild,
The fence withdrawn, he gives them every beam,
And spreads his hopes before the blaze of day.
To raise the prickly and green coated gourd
So grateful to the palate, and when rare
So coveted, else base and disesteem'd—
Food for the vulgar merely—is an art
That toiling ages have but just matured,
And at this moment unessay'd in song.
Yet gnats have had, and frogs and mice long since
Their eulogy; those sang the Mantuan bard,
And these the Grecian in ennobling strains;
And in thy numbers, Phillips, shines for aye
The solitary Shilling. Pardon then,
Ye sage dispensers of poetic fame!
Th' ambition of one meaner far, whose pow'rs
Presuming an attempt not less sublime,
Pant for the praise of dressing to the taste

Of critic appetite, no sordid fare,
A cucumber, while costly yet and scarce.
  Grudge not, ye rich (since luxury must have
His dainties, and the world's more num'rous half
Lives by contriving delicates for you),
Grudge not the cost. Ye little know the cares,
The vigilance, the labour, and the skill
That day and night are exercised, and hang
Upon the ticklish balance of suspense,
That ye may garnish your profuse regales
With summer fruits, brought forth by wintry suns.
Ten thousand dangers lie in wait to thwart
The process. Heat and cold, and wind and steam,
Moisture and drought, mice, worms, and swarming
    flies
Minute as dust and numberless, oft work
Dire disappointment that admits no cure,
And which no care can obviate. It were long,
Too long to tell th' expedients and the shifts
Which he, that fights a season so severe,
Devises, while he guards his tender trust,
And oft, at last, in vain. The learn'd and wise
Sarcastic would exclaim, and judge the song
Cold as its theme, and, like its theme, the fruit
Of too much labour, worthless when produced.
  Oh blest seclusion from a jarring world,
Which he, thus occupied, enjoys! Retreat
Cannot, indeed, to guilty man restore
Lost innocence, or cancel follies past;
But it has peace, and much secures the mind
From all assaults of evil; proving still
A faithful barrier, not o'erleap'd with ease
By vicious custom, raging uncontroll'd
Abroad, and desolating public life.
When fierce temptation, seconded within

By traitor appetite, and arm'd with darts
Temper'd in hell, invades the throbbing breast,
To combat may be glorious, and success
Perhaps may crown us, but to fly is safe.
Had I the choice of sublunary good,
What could I wish that I possess not here?
Health, leisure, means t' improve it, friendship, peace,
No loose or wanton, though a wand'ring muse,
And constant occupation without care.
Thus blest, I draw a picture of that bliss;
Hopeless, indeed, that dissipated minds,
And profligate abusers of a world
Created fair so much in vain for them,
Should seek the guiltless joys that I describe,
Allured by my report; but sure no less
That, self-condemn'd, they must neglect the prize,
And what they will not taste, must yet approve.
Ambition, av'rice, penury incurr'd
By endless riot, vanity, the lust
Of pleasure and variety, despatch,
As duly as the swallows disappear,
The world of wand'ring knights and squires to town;
London ingulfs them all. The shark is there,
And the shark's prey; the spendthrift, and the leech
That sucks him. There the sycophant, and he
That with bare-headed and obsequious bows
Begs a warm office, doom'd to a cold jail
And groat per diem if his patron frown.
The levee swarms, as if in golden pomp
Were character'd on ev'ry statesman's door,
"BATTER'D AND BANKRUPT FORTUNES MENDED HERE."

These are the charms that sully and eclipse
The charms of Nature. 'Tis the cruel gripe
That lean hard-handed poverty inflicts.
The hope of better things, the chance to win,
The wish to shine, the thirst to be amused,
That, at the sound of Winter's hoary wing,
Unpeople all our counties of such herds
Of flutt'ring, loit'ring, cringing, begging, loose
And wanton vagrants, as make London, vast
And boundless as it is, a crowded coop.
Oh thou resort and mart of all the earth,
Chequer'd with all complexions of mankind,
And spotted with all crimes; in whom I see
Much that I love, and more that I admire,
And all that I abhor; thou freckled fair,
That pleases and yet shocks me, I can laugh
And I can weep, can hope and can despond,
Feel wrath and pity when I think of thee!
Ten righteous would have saved a city once,
And thou hast many righteous.—Well for thee—
That salt preserves thee; more corrupted else,
And therefore more obnoxious at this hour,
Than Sodom in her day had pow'r to be,
For whom God heard his Abr'am plead in vain.

BOOK IV.—THE WINTER EVENING.

HARK! 'tis the twanging horn o'er yonder bridge
That with its wearisome but needful length
Bestrides the wintry flood, in which the moon
Sees her unwrinkled face reflected bright;—
He comes, the herald of a noisy world,
With spatter'd boots, strapp'd waist, and frozen locks,
News from all nations lumb'ring at his back.

True to his charge the close-pack'd load behind.
Yet careless what he brings; his one concern
Is to conduct it to the destined inn,
And, having dropp'd th' expected bag—pass on.
He whistles as he goes, light-hearted wretch,
Cold and yet cheerful: messenger of grief
Perhaps to thousands, and of joy to some;
To him indiff'rent whether grief or joy.
Houses in ashes, and the fall of stocks,
Births, deaths, and marriages, epistles wet
With tears that trickled down the writer's cheeks,
Fast as the periods from his fluent quill,
Or charged with am'rous sighs of absent swains,
Or nymphs responsive, equally affect
His horse and him, unconscious of them all.
But oh, th' important budget! usher'd in
With such heart-shaking music, who can say
What are its tidings? have our troops awaked?
Or do they still, as if with opium drugg'd,
Snore to the murmurs of th' Atlantic wave?
Is India free? and does she wear her plumed
And jewell'd turban with a smile of peace,
Or do we grind her still? The grand debate,
The popular harangue, the tart reply,
The logic, and the wisdom, and the wit,
And the loud laugh—I long to know them all;
I burn to set th' imprison'd wranglers free,
And give them voice and utt'rance once again.
Now stir the fire, and close the shutters fast,
Let fall the curtains, wheel the sofa round,
And while the bubbling and loud-hissing urn
Throws up a streamy column, and the cups,
That cheer but not inebriate, wait on each,
So let us welcome peaceful evening in.
Not such his evening, who with shining face

Sweats in the crowded theatre, and squeez'd
And bored with elbow-points through both his sides,
Out-scolds the ranting actor on the stage ;
Nor his, who patient stands till his feet throb
And his head thumps, to feed upon the breath
Of patriots bursting with heroic rage,
Or placemen, all tranquillity and smiles.
This folio of four pages, happy work !
Which not ev'n critics criticise, that holds
Inquisitive attention while I read
Fast bound in chains of silence, which the fair,
Though eloquent themselves, yet fear to break,
What is it but a map of busy life,
Its fluctuations and its vast concerns ?
Here runs the mountainous and craggy ridge
That tempts ambition. On the summit, see,
The seals of office glitter in his eyes ;
He climbs, he pants, he grasps them. At his heels,
Close at his heels, a demagogue ascends,
And with a dexterous jerk soon twists him down
And wins them, but to lose them in his turn.
Here rills of oily eloquence, in soft
Meanders, lubricate the course they take ;
The modest speaker is ashamed and grieved
T' engross a moment's notice, and yet begs,
Begs a propitious ear for his poor thoughts,
However trivial all that he conceives.
Sweet bashfulness ! it claims, at least, this praise,
The dearth of information and good sense,
That it foretells us, always comes to pass.
Cat'racts of declamation thunder here,
There forests of no meaning spread the page
In which all comprehension wanders lost ;
While fields of pleasantry amuse us there,
With merry descants on a nation's woes

The rest appears a wilderness of strange
But gay confusion ; roses for the cheeks,
And lilies for the brows of faded age,
Teeth for the toothless, ringlets for the bald,
Heav'n, earth, and ocean plunder'd of their sweets,
Nectareous essences, Olympian dews,
Sermons, and city feasts, and fav'rite airs,
Ethereal journeys, submarine exploits,
And Katterfelto with his hair on end
At his own wonders, wond'ring for his bread.
Come, Evening, once again, season of peace,
Return sweet Evening, and continue long !
Methinks I see thee in the streaky west,
With matron-step slow-moving, while the night
Treads on thy sweeping train ; one hand employ'd
In letting fall the curtain of repose
On bird and beast, the other charged for man
With sweet oblivion of the cares of day ;
Not sumptuously adorn'd, nor needing aid,
Like homely-featured night, of clust'ring gems,
A star or two just twinkling on thy brow
Suffices thee ; save that the moon is thine,
No less than hers, not worn indeed on high
With ostentatious pageantry, but set
With modest grandeur in thy purple zone,
Resplendent less, but of an ampler round.
Come then, and thou shalt find thy vot'ry calm,
Or make me so. Composure is thy gift ;
And whether I devote thy gentle hours
To books, to music, or the poet's toil,
To weaving nets for bird-alluring fruit,
Or twining silken threads round iv'ry reels,
When they command whom man was born to please,
I slight thee not, but make thee welcome still.

Just when our drawing-rooms begin to blaze
With lights, by clear reflection multiplied
From many a mirror, in which he of Gath,
Goliath, might have seen his giant bulk
Whole without stooping, tow'ring crest and all,
My pleasures too begin. But me perhaps
The glowing hearth may satisfy awhile
With faint illumination, that uplifts
The shadow to the ceiling, there by fits
Dancing uncouthly to the quiv'ring flame.
Not undelightful is an hour to me
So spent in parlour twilight; such a gloom
Suits well the thoughtful or unthinking mind,
The mind contemplative, with some new theme
Pregnant, or indisposed alike to all.
Laugh ye, who boast your more mercurial pow'rs,
That never feel a stupor, know no pause,
Nor need one; I am conscious, and confess,
Fearless, a soul that does not always think.
Me oft has fancy ludicrous and wild
Sooth'd with a waking dream of houses, tow'rs,
Trees, churches, and strange visages express'd
In the red cinders, while with poring eye
I gazed, myself creating what I saw.
Nor less amused have I quiescent watch'd
The sooty films that play upon the bars
Pendulous, and foreboding in the view
Of superstition, prophesying still,
Though still deceived, some stranger's near approach.
'Tis thus the understanding takes repose
In indolent vacuity of thought,
And sleeps and is refresh'd. Meanwhile the face
Conceals the mood lethargic with a mask
Of deep deliberation, as the man
Were task'd to his full strength, absorb'd and lost.

Thus oft reclined at ease, I lose an hour
At evening, till at length the freezing blast
That sweeps the bolted shutter, summons home
The recollected pow'rs, and, snapping short
The glassy threads with which the fancy weaves
Her brittle toys, restores me to myself.
How calm is my recess ! and how the frost
Raging abroad, and the rough wind, endear
The silence and the warmth enjoy'd within !
I saw the woods and fields at close of day,
A variegated show ; the meadows green
Though faded, and the lands, where lately waved
The golden harvest, of a mellow brown,
Upturn'd so lately by the forceful share ;
I saw far off the weedy fallows smile
With verdure not unprofitable, grazed
By flocks fast feeding, and selecting each
His fav'rite herb ; while all the leafless groves
That skirt th' horizon wore a sable hue,
Scarce noticed in the kindred dusk of eve.
To-morrow brings a change, a total change,
Which even now, though silently perform'd
And slowly, and by most unfelt, the face
Of universal nature undergoes.
Fast falls a fleecy show'r ; the downy flakes,
Descending and with never-ceasing lapse
Softly alighting upon all below,
Assimilate all objects. Earth receives
Gladly the thick'ning mantle, and the green
And tender blade that fear'd the chilling blast,
Escapes unhurt beneath so warm a veil.
Would I had fall'n upon those happier days
That poets celebrate ; those golden times
And those Arcadian scenes that Maro sings,
And Sidney, warbler of poetic prose.

Nymphs were Dianas then, and swains had hearts
That felt their virtues. Innocence it seems.
From courts dismiss'd, found shelter in the groves:
The footsteps of simplicity, impress'd
Upon the yielding herbage (so they sing),
Then were not all effaced. Then speech profane
And manners profligate were rarely found,
Observed as prodigies, and soon reclaim'd.
Vain wish! those days were never: airy dreams
Sat for the picture; and the poet's hand,
Imparting substance to an empty shade,
Imposed a gay delirium for a truth.
Grant it: I still must envy them an age
That favour'd such a dream, in days like these
Impossible, when virtue is so scarce,
That to suppose a scene where she presides
Is tramontane, and stumbles all belief.
No. We are polish'd now. The rural lass,
Whom once her virgin modesty and grace,
Her artless manners and her neat attire,
So dignified, that she was hardly less
Than the fair shepherdess of old romance,
Is seen no more. The character is lost.
Her head, adorn'd with lappets pinn'd aloft
And ribbons streaming gay, superbly raised
And magnified beyond all human size,
Indebted to some smart wig-weaver's hand
For more than half the tresses it sustains;
Her elbows ruffled, and her tott'ring form
Ill propp'd upon French heels; she might be deem'd
(But that the basket dangling on her arm
Interprets her more truly) of a rank
Too proud for dairy-work, or sale of eggs;
Expect her soon with foot-boy at her heels,

No longer blushing for her awkward load,
Her train and her umbrella all her care.
The town has tinged the country; and the stain
Appears a spot upon a vestal's robe,
The worse for what it soils. The fashion runs
Down into scenes still rural, but alas!
Scenes rarely graced with rural manners now.
Time was when in the pastoral retreat
Th' unguarded door was safe; men did not watch
T' invade another's right, or guard their own.
Then sleep was undisturb'd by fear, unscared
By drunken howlings; and the chilling tale
Of midnight murder was a wonder heard
With doubtful credit, told to frighten babes.
Man in society is like a flow'r
Blown in its native bed. 'Tis there alone
His faculties expanded in full bloom
Shine out, there only reach their proper use.
But man associated and leagued with man
By regal warrant, or self-joined by bond
For interest sake, or swarming into clans
Beneath one head for purposes of war,
Like flow'rs selected from the rest, and bound
And bundled close to fill some crowded vase,
Fades rapidly, and by compression marr'd
Contracts defilement not to be endured.
Hence charter'd boroughs are such public plagues,
And burghers, men immaculate perhaps
In all their private functions, once combined,
Become a loathsome body, only fit
For dissolution, hurtful to the main.
Hence merchants, unimpeachable of sin
Against the charities of domestic life,
Incorporated, seem at once to lose
Their nature, and, disclaiming all regard

For mercy and the common rights of man,
Build factories with blood, conducting trade
At the sword's point, and dyeing the white robe
Of innocent commercial justice red.
Hence to the field of glory, as the world
Misdeems it, dazzled by its bright array,
With all the majesty of thund'ring pomp,
Enchanting music, and immortal wreaths,
Is but a school where thoughtlessness is taught
On principle, where foppery atones
For folly, gallantry for ev'ry vice.
But slighted as it is, and by the great
Abandon'd, and, which still I more regret,
Infected with the manners and the modes
It knew not once, the country wins me still.
I never framed a wish, or form'd a plan
That flatter'd me with hopes of earthly bliss,
But there I laid the scene. There early stray'd
My fancy, ere yet liberty of choice
Had found me, or the hope of being free.
Hail, therefore, patroness of health and ease
And contemplation, heart-consoling joys
And harmless pleasures, in the throng'd abode
Of multitudes unknown, hail rural life!
Address himself who will to the pursuit
Of honours, or emolument, or fame,
I shall not add myself to such a chase,
Thwart his attempts, or envy his success.
Some must be great. Great offices will have
Great talents. And God gives to ev'ry man
The virtue, temper, understanding, taste,
That lifts him into life, and lets him fall
Just in the niche he was ordain'd to fill.
To the deliv'rer of an injured land
He gives a tongue t' enlarge upon, a heart

To feel, and courage to redress her wrongs ;
To monarchs dignity, to judges sense ;
To artists ingenuity and skill ;
To me an unambitious mind, content
In the low vale of life, that early felt
A wish for ease and leisure, and ere long
Found here that leisure and that ease I wish'd.

BOOK V.—THE WINTER MORNING WALK.

'Tis morning ; and the sun, with ruddy orb
Ascending, fires th' horizon ; while the clouds,
That crowd away before the driving wind,
More ardent as the disk emerges more,
Resemble most some city in a blaze,
Seen through the leafless wood. His slanting ray
Slides ineffectual down the snowy vale,
And, tinging all with his own rosy hue,
From ev'ry herb and ev'ry spiry blade
Stretches a length of shadow o'er the field ;
Mine, spindling into longitude immense,
In spite of gravity, and sage remark
That I myself am but a fleeting shade,
Provokes me to a smile. With eye askance
I view the muscular proportion'd limb
Transform'd to a lean shank ; the shapeless pair,
As they design'd to mock me, at my side
Take step for step, and, as I near approach
The cottage, walk along the plaster'd wall,
Prepost'rous sight ! the legs without the man.
The verdure of the plain lies buried deep
Beneath the dazzling deluge, and the bents
And coarser grass upspearing o'er the rest,
Of late unsightly and unseen, now shine
Conspicuous, and, in bright apparel clad,

And fledged with icy feathers, nod superb.
The streams are lost amid the splendid blank,
O'erwhelming all distinction. On the flood
Indurated and fix'd the snowy weight
Lies undissolved, while silently beneath
And unperceived the current steals away;
Not so where, scornful of a check, it leaps
The mill-dam, dashes on the restless wheel,
And wantons in the pebbly gulf below.
No frost can bind it there. Its utmost force
Can but arrest the light and smoky mist
That in its fall the liquid sheet throws wide.
And see where it has hung th' embroider'd banks
With forms so various, that no pow'rs of art,
The pencil, or the pen, may trace the scene!
Here glitt'ring turrets rise, upbearing high
(Fantastic misarrangement) on the roof
Large growth of what may seem the sparkling trees,
And shrubs of fairy land. The crystal drops
That trickle down the branches, fast congeal'd,
Shoot into pillars of pellucid length,
And prop the pile they but adorn'd before.
Here grotto within grotto safe defies
The sunbeam. There imboss'd and fretted wild,
The growing wonder takes a thousand shapes
Capricious, in which fancy seeks in vain
The likeness of some object seen before.
Thus Nature works as if to mock at art,
And in defiance of her rival pow'rs;
By these fortuitous and random strokes
Performing such inimitable feats,
As she with all her rules can never reach.
Less worthy of applause though more admired,
Because a novelty, the work of man,
Imperial mistress of the fur-clad Russ!

Thy most magnificent and mighty freak,
The wonder of the North. No forest fell
When thou wouldst build ; no quarry sent its stores
T' enrich thy walls ; but thou didst hew the floods,
And make thy marble of the glassy wave.
In such a palace Aristæus found
Cyrene, when he bore the plaintive tale
Of his lost bees to her maternal ear.
In such a palace poetry might place
The armoury of winter, where his troops,
The gloomy clouds, find weapons, arrowy sleet,
Skin-piercing volley, blossom-bruising hail,
And snow that often blinds the trav'ller's course,
And wraps him in an unexpected tomb.
Silently as a dream the fabric rose.
No sound of hammer or of saw was there.
Ice upon ice, the well-adjusted parts
Were soon conjoin'd, nor other cement ask'd
Than water interfused to make them one.
Lamps gracefully disposed, and of all hues,
Illumined ev'ry side. A wat'ry light
Gleam'd through the clear transparency, that seem'd
Another moon new-risen, or meteor fall'n
From heav'n to earth, of lambent flame serene.
So stood the brittle prodigy, though smooth
And slipp'ry the materials, yet frost-bound
Firm as a rock. Nor wanted aught within
That royal residence might well befit,
For grandeur or for use. Long wavy wreaths
Of flow'rs, that fear'd no enemy but warmth,
Blush'd on the panels. Mirror needed none
Where all was vitreous, but in order due
Convivial table and commodious seat
(What seem'd at least commodious seat) were there,
Sofa and couch and high-built throne august.

The same lubricity was found in all,
And all was moist to the warm touch ; a scene
Of evanescent glory, once a stream,
And soon to slide into a stream again.
Alas ! 'twas but a mortifying stroke
Of undesign'd severity, that glanced
(Made by a monarch) on her own estate,
On human grandeur and the courts of kings.
'Twas transient in its nature, as in show
'Twas durable ; as worthless, as it seem'd
Intrinsically precious ; to the foot
Treach'rous and false ; it smiled, and it was cold.
Great princes have great playthings. Some have play'd
At hewing mountains into men, and some
At building human wonders mountain high.
Some have amused the dull sad years of life
(Life spent in indolence, and therefore sad)
With schemes of monumental fame, and sought
By pyramids and mausolean pomp,
Short-lived themselves, t' immortalise their bones.
Some seek diversion in the tented field,
And make the sorrows of mankind their sport.
But war's a game, which, were their subjects wise,
Kings should not play at. Nations would do well
T' extort their truncheons from the puny hands
Of heroes, whose infirm and baby minds
Are gratified with mischief, and who spoil,
Because men suffer it, their toy the world.

. . . . . .

'Tis liberty alone that gives the flow'r
Of fleeting life its lustre and perfume,
And we are weeds without it. All constraint
Except what wisdom lays on evil men,
Is evil ; hurts the faculties, impedes

Their progress in the road of science ; blinds
The eyesight of discov'ry, and begets,
In those that suffer it, a sordid mind
Bestial, a meagre intellect, unfit
To be the tenant of man's noble form.
Thee therefore still, blameworthy as thou art,
With all thy loss of empire, and though squeezed
By public exigence, till annual food
Fails for the craving hunger of the state,
Thee I account still happy, and the chief
Among the nations, seeing thou art free !
My native nook of earth ! thy clime is rude,
Replete with vapours, and disposes much
All hearts to sadness, and none more than mine ;
Thine unadult'rate manners are less soft
And plausible than social life requires,
And thou hast need of discipline and art
To give thee what politer France receives
From Nature's bounty—that humane address
And sweetness, without which no pleasure is
In converse, either starved by cold reserve,
Or flush'd with fierce dispute, a senseless brawl ;
Yet, being free, I love thee. For the sake
Of that one feature, can be well content,
Disgraced as thou hast been, poor as thou art,
To seek no sublunary rest beside.
But once enslaved, farewell ! I could endure
Chains nowhere patiently ; and chains at home,
Where I am free by birthright, not at all.
Then what were left of roughness in the grain
Of British natures, wanting its excuse
That it belongs to freemen, would disgust
And shock me. I should then with double pain
Feel all the rigour of thy fickle clime ;
And, if I must bewail the blessing lost

For which our Hampdens and our Sidneys bled,
I would at least bewail it under skies
Milder, among a people less austere,
In scenes which, having never known me free,
Would not reproach me with the loss I felt.
Do I forebode impossible events,
And tremble at vain dreams? Heav'n grant I may;
But th' age of virtuous politics is past,
And we are deep in that of cold pretence.
Patriots are grown too shrewd to be sincere,
And we too wise to trust them. He that takes,
Deep in his soft credulity, the stamp
Design'd by loud declaimers on the part
Of liberty, themselves the slaves of lust,
Incurs derision for his easy faith
And lack of knowledge, and with cause enough.
For when was public virtue to be found,
Where private was not? Can he love the whole
Who loves no part? he be a nation's friend
Who is, in truth, the friend of no man there?
Can he be strenuous in his country's cause,
Who slights the charities for whose dear sake
That country, if at all, must be beloved?
—'Tis therefore sober and good men are sad
For England's glory, seeing it wax pale
And sickly, while her champions wear their hearts
So loose to private duty, that no brain,
Healthful and undisturb'd by factious fumes,
Can dream them trusty to the gen'ral weal.
Such were not they of old, whose temper'd blades
Dispersed the shackles of usurp'd control,
And hew'd them link from link. Then Albion's sons
Were sons indeed. They felt a filial heart
Beat high within them at a mother's wrongs,
And shining each in his domestic sphere,

Shone brighter still once call'd to public view.
'Tis therefore many, whose sequester'd lot
Forbids their interference, looking on,
Anticipate perforce some dire event;
And seeing the old castle of the state,
That promised once more firmness, so assail'd
That all its tempest-beaten turrets shake,
Stand motionless expectants of its fall.
All has its date below. The fatal hour
Was register'd in Heav'n ere time began.
We turn to dust, and all our mightiest works
Die too. The deep foundations that we lay
Time ploughs them up, and not a trace remains.
We build with what we deem eternal rock;
A distant age asks where the fabric stood;
And in the dust, sifted and search'd in vain,
The undiscoverable secret sleeps.
  But there is yet a liberty unsung
By poets, and by senators upraised,
Which monarchs cannot grant, nor all the power
Of earth and hell confed'rate take away;
A liberty, which persecution, fraud,
Oppression, prisons, have no power to bind,
Which whoso tastes can be enslaved no more.
'Tis liberty of heart, deriv'd from Heav'n,
Bought with His blood who gave it to mankind,
And seal'd with the same token. It is held
By charter, and that charter sanction'd sure
By th' unimpeachable and awful oath
And promise of a God. His other gifts
All bear the royal stamp that speaks them His,
And are august, but this transcends them all.
His other works, this visible display
Of all-creating energy and might,
Are grand, no doubt, and worthy of the word

That, finding an interminable space
Unoccupied, has fill'd the void so well,
And made so sparkling what was dark before.
But these are not His glory. Man, 'tis true,
Smit with the beauty of so fair a scene,
Might well suppose th' artificer divine
Meant it eternal, had He not Himself
Pronounced it transient, glorious as it is,
And still designing a more glorious far,
Doom'd it, as insufficient for His praise.
These, therefore, are occasional, and pass;
Form'd for the confutation of the fool
Whose lying heart disputes against a God;
That office served, they must be swept away.
Not so the labours of His love; they shine
In other heavens than these that we behold,
And fade not. There is paradise that fears
No forfeiture, and of its fruits He sends
Large prelibation oft to saints below.
Of these the first in order, and the pledge
And confident assurance of the rest,
Is liberty; a flight into his arms
Ere yet mortality's fine threads give way,
A clear escape from tyrannising lust,
And full immunity from penal woe.
Grace makes the slave a freeman. 'Tis a change
That turns to ridicule the turgid speech
And stately tone of moralists, who boast,
As if, like him of fabulous renown,
They had indeed ability to smooth
The shag of savage nature, and were each
An Orpheus and omnipotent in song.
But transformation of apostate man
From fool to wise, from earthly to divine,
Is work for Him that made him. He alone,

And he, by means in philosophic eyes
Trivial and worthy of disdain, achieves
The wonder ; humanising what is brute
In the lost kind, extracting from the lips
Of asps their venom, overpow'ring strength
By weakness, and hostility by love.
He is the freeman whom the truth makes free,
And all are slaves beside. There's not a chain
That hellish foes confed'rate for his harm
Can wind around him, but he casts it off
With as much ease as Samson his green withes.
He looks abroad into the varied field
Of Nature, and, though poor perhaps compared
With those whose mansions glitter in his sight,
Calls the delightful scen'ry all his own.
His are the mountains, and the valleys his,
And the resplendent rivers. His t' enjoy
With a propriety that none can feel,
But who, with filial confidence inspired,
Can lift to heav'n an unpresumptuous eye,
And smiling say—My Father made them all !
Are they not his by a peculiar right,
And by an emphasis of int'rest his,
Whose eye they fill with tears of holy joy,
Whose heart with praise, and whose exalted mind
With worthy thoughts of that unwearied love
That plann'd, and built, and still upholds a world
So clothed with beauty, for rebellious man ?
Yes—ye may fill your garners, ye that reap
The loaded soil, and ye may waste much good
In senseless riot ; but ye will not find
In feast or in the chase, in song or dance,
A liberty like his, who, unimpeach'd
Of usurpation, and to no man's wrong,
Appropriates nature as his Father's work,

And has a richer use of yours, than you.
He is indeed a freeman. Free by birth
Of no mean city, plann'd or ere the hills
Were built, the fountains open'd, or the sea
With all his roaring multitude of waves.
His freedom is the same in ev'ry state;
And no condition of this changeful life
So manifold in cares, whose ev'ry day
Brings its own evil with it, makes it less.
For he has wings that neither sickness, pain,
Nor penury, can cripple or confine.
No nook so narrow but he spreads them there
With ease, and is at large. Th' oppressor holds
His body bound, but knows not what a range
His spirit takes, unconscious of a chain;
And that to bind him is a vain attempt,
Whom God delights in, and in whom he dwells.
Acquaint thyself with God if thou wouldst taste
His works. Admitted once to His embrace,
Thou shalt perceive that thou wast blind before;
Thine eye shall be instructed, and thine heart,
Made pure, shall relish, with divine delight
Till then unfelt, what hands divine have wrought.
Brutes graze the mountain-top with faces prone,
And eyes intent upon the scanty herb
It yields them; or, recumbent on its brow,
Ruminate, heedless of the scene outspread
Beneath, beyond, and stretching far away
From inland regions to the distant main.
Man views it and admires, but rests content
With what he views. The landscape has his praise,
But not its Author. Unconcern'd who form'd
The paradise he sees, he finds it such,
And such well-pleased to find it, asks no more.
Not so the mind that has been touch'd from heav'n,

And in the school of sacred wisdom taught
To read His wonders, in whose thought the world,
Fair as it is, existed ere it was.
Not for its own sake merely, but for His
Much more who fashion'd it, he gives it praise;
Praise that from earth resulting as it ought
To earth's acknowledged sov'reign, finds at once
Its only just proprietor in Him.
The soul that sees him, or receives sublimed
New faculties, or learns at least t'employ
More worthily the pow'rs she own'd before;
Discerns in all things what, with stupid gaze
Of ignorance, till then she overlook'd,
A ray of heav'nly light gilding all forms
Terrestrial, in the vast and the minute,
The unambiguous footsteps of the God
Who gives its lustre to an insect's wing,
And wheels His throne upon the rolling worlds.
Much conversant with heav'n, she often holds
With those fair ministers of light to man,
That fill the skies nightly with silent pomp,
Sweet conference; inquires what strains were they
With which heav'n rang, when ev'ry star, in haste
To gratulate the new-created earth,
Sent forth a voice, and all the sons of God
Shouted for joy.—"Tell me, ye shining hosts
That navigate a sea that knows no storms,
Beneath a vault unsullied with a cloud,
If from your elevation, whence ye view
Distinctly scenes invisible to man,
And systems of whose birth no tidings yet
Have reach'd this nether world, ye spy a race
Favour'd as ours, transgressors from the womb,
And hasting to a grave, yet doom'd to rise,
And to possess a brighter heav'n than yours?

As one who, long detain'd on foreign shores,
Pants to return, and when he sees afar
His country's weather-bleach'd and batter'd rocks
From the green wave emerging, darts an eye
Radiant with joy towards the happy land;
So I with animated hopes behold,
And many an aching wish, your beamy fires,
That show like beacons in the blue abyss,
Ordain'd to guide th' embodied spirit home
From toilsome life, to never-ending rest.
Love kindles as I gaze. I feel desires
That give assurance of their own success,
And that infused from heav'n must thither tend."
So reads he Nature whom the lamp of truth
Illuminates. Thy lamp, mysterious Word!
Which whoso sees, no longer wanders lost
With intellects bemazed in endless doubt,
But runs the road of wisdom. Thou hast built,
With means that were not till by Thee employ'd,
Worlds that had never been, hadst Thou in strength
Been less, or less benevolent than strong.
They are Thy witnesses, who speak Thy pow'r
And goodness infinite, but speak in ears
That hear not, or receive not their report.
In vain Thy creatures testify of Thee
Till thou proclaim Thyself. Theirs is indeed
A teaching voice; but 'tis the praise of Thine
That whom it teaches it makes prompt to learn,
And with the boon gives talents for its use.
Till Thou art heard, imaginations vain
Possess the heart, and fables, false as hell,
Yet deem'd oracular, lure down to death
The uninform'd and heedless souls of men.
We give to chance, blind chance, ourselves as blind,
The glory of Thy work, which yet appears

Perfect and unimpeachable of blame,
Challenging human scrutiny, and proved
Then skilful most when most severely judged.
But chance is not ; or is not where Thou reign'st:
Thy providence forbids that fickle pow'r
(If pow'r she be that works but to confound)
To mix her wild vagaries with Thy laws.
Yet thus we dote, refusing, while we can,
Instruction, and inventing to ourselves
Gods such as guilt makes welcome, gods that sleep,
Or disregard our follies, or that sit
Amused spectators of this bustling stage.
Thee we reject, unable to abide
Thy purity, till pure as Thou art pure,
Made such by Thee, we love Thee for that cause
For which we shunn'd and hated Thee before.
Then we are free: then liberty, like day,
Breaks on the soul, and by a flash from heav'n
Fires all the faculties with glorious joy.
A voice is heard that mortal ears hear not
Till Thou hast touch'd them; 'tis the voice of song,
A loud Hosanna sent from all Thy works,
Which he that hears it, with a shout repeats,
And adds his rapture to the gen'ral praise.
In that blest moment, Nature, throwing wide
Her veil opaque, discloses with a smile
The Author of her beauties, who, retired
Behind His own creation, works unseen
By the impure, and hears His pow'r denied.
Thou art the source and centre of all minds,
Their only point of rest, eternal Word!
From Thee departing, they are lost and rove
At random, without honour, hope, or peace.
From Thee is all that soothes the life of man,
His high endeavour, and his glad success,

His strength to suffer, and his will to serve.
But oh, Thou bounteous Giver of all good,
Thou art of all Thy gifts Thyself the crown!
Give what Thou canst, without Thee we are poor,
And with Thee rich, take what Thou wilt away.

BOOK VI.—THE WINTER WALK AT NOON.

THERE is in souls a sympathy with sounds,
And as the mind is pitch'd the ear is pleased
With melting airs or martial, brisk or grave;
Some chord in unison with what we hear
Is touch'd within us, and the heart replies.
How soft the music of those village bells
Falling at intervals upon the ear
In cadence sweet! now dying all away,
Now pealing loud again and louder still,
Clear and sonorous as the gale comes on.
With easy force it opens all the cells
Where mem'ry slept. Wherever I have heard
A kindred melody, the scene recurs,
And with it all its pleasures and its pains.
Such comprehensive views the spirit takes,
That in a few short moments I retrace
(As in a map the voyager his course)
The windings of my way through many years.
Short as in retrospect the journey seems,
It seem'd not always short; the rugged path,
And prospect oft so dreary and forlorn,
Moved many a sigh at its disheart'ning length.
Yet feeling present evils, while the past
Faintly impress the mind, or not at all,
How readily we wish time spent revoked,
That we might try the ground again, where once

(Through inexperience as we now perceive)
We miss'd that happiness we might have found.
Some friend is gone, perhaps his son's best friend,
A father, whose authority, in show
When most severe, and must'ring all its force,
Was but the graver countenance of love;
Whose favour, like the clouds of spring, might low'r,
And utter now and then an awful voice,
But had a blessing in its darkest frown,
Threat'ning at once and nourishing the plant.
We loved, but not enough, the gentle hand
That rear'd us. At a thoughtless age, allured
By ev'ry gilded folly, we renounced
His shelt'ring side, and wilfully forewent
That converse which we now in vain regret.
How gladly would the man recall to life
The boy's neglected sire! a mother too,
That softer friend, perhaps more gladly still,
Might he demand them at the gates of death.
Sorrow has since they went subdued and tamed
The playful humour; he could now endure
(Himself grown sober in the vale of tears)
And feel a parent's presence no restraint.
But not to understand a treasure's worth
Till time has stol'n away the slighted good,
Is cause of half the poverty we feel,
And makes the world the wilderness it is.
The few that pray at all pray oft amiss,
And seeking grace t' improve the prize they hold,
Would urge a wiser suit than asking more.
The night was winter in his roughest mood,
The morning sharp and clear; but now at noon
Upon the southern side of the slant hills,
And where the woods fence off the northern blast,

The season smiles, resigning all its rage,
And has the warmth of May. The vault is blue
Without a cloud, and white without a speck
The dazzling splendour of the scene below.
Again the harmony comes o'er the vale,
And through the trees I view th' embattled tow'r
Whence all the music. I again perceive
The soothing influence of the wafted strains,
And settle in soft musings, as I tread
The walk still verdant under oaks and elms,
Whose outspread branches overarch the glade.
The roof, though movable through all its length,
As the wind sways it, has yet well sufficed,
And, intercepting in their silent fall
The frequent flakes, has kept a path for me.
No noise is here, or none that hinders thought.
The redbreast warbles still, but is content
With slender notes and more than half suppress'd.
Pleased with his solitude, and flitting light
From spray to spray, where'er he rests he shakes
From many a twig the pendant drops of ice,
That tinkle in the wither'd leaves below.
Stillness, accompanied with sounds so soft,
Charms more than silence. Meditation here
May think down hours to moments. Here the heart
May give an useful lesson to the head,
And learning wiser grow without his books.
Knowledge and wisdom, far from being one,
Have ofttimes no connection. Knowledge dwells
In heads replete with thoughts of other men;
Wisdom in minds attentive to their own.
Knowledge, a rude unprofitable mass,
The mere materials with which wisdom builds,
Till smooth'd and squared and fitted to its place,
Does but encumber whom it seems t' enrich.

Knowledge is proud that he has learned so much;
Wisdom is humble that he knows no more.
Books are not seldom talismans and spells
By which the magic art of shrewder wits
Holds an unthinking multitude inthrall'd.
Some to the fascination of a name
Surrender judgment hoodwink'd. Some the style
Infatuates, and, through labyrinths and wilds
Of error, leads them by a tune entranced;
While sloth seduces more, too weak to bear
The insupportable fatigue of thought,
And swallowing therefore without pause or choice
The total grist unsifted, husks and all.
But trees, and rivulets whose rapid course
Defies the check of winter, haunts of deer,
And sheep-walks populous with bleating lambs,
And lanes, in which the primrose ere her time
Peeps through the moss that clothes the hawthorn root,
Deceive no student. Wisdom there, and truth,
Not shy as in the world, and to be won
By slow solicitation, seize at once
The roving thought, and fix it on themselves.
Some say that, in the origin of things,
When all creation started into birth,
The infant elements received a law
From which they swerve not since; that under force
Of that controlling ordinance they move,
And need not His immediate hand, who first
Prescribed their course, to regulate it now.
Thus dream they, and contrive to save a God
Th' incumbrance of His own concerns, and spare
The great Artificer of all that moves
The stress of a continual act, the pain
Of unremitted vigilance and care,

As too laborious and severe a task.
So man the moth is not afraid, it seems,
To span Omnipotence, and measure might
That knows no measure, by the scanty rule
And standard of his own, that is to-day,
And is not, ere to-morrow's sun go down.
But how should matter occupy a charge
Dull as it is, and satisfy a law
So vast in its demands, unless impell'd
To ceaseless service by a ceaseless force,
And under pressure of some conscious cause?
The Lord of all, Himself through all diffused,
Sustains and is the life of all that lives.
Nature is but a name for an effect
Whose cause is God. He feeds the secret fire
By which the mighty process is maintain'd,
Who sleeps not, is not weary; in whose sight
Slow-circling ages are as transient days;
Whose work is without labour, whose designs
No flaw deforms, no difficulty thwarts,
And whose beneficence no charge exhausts.
Here unmolested, through whatever sign
The sun proceeds, I wander; neither mist,
Nor freezing sky, nor sultry, checking me,
Nor stranger intermeddling with my joy.
Ev'n in the spring and play-time of the year,
That calls the unwonted villager abroad
With all her little ones, a sportive train,
To gather king-cups in the yellow mead,
And prank their hair with daisies, or to pick
A cheap but wholesome salad from the brook,
These shades are all my own. The tim'rous hare,
Grown so familiar with her frequent guest,
Scarce shuns me; and the stock-dove unalarm'd
Sits cooing in the pine-tree, nor suspends

His long love-ditty for my near approach.
Drawn from his refuge in some lonely elm
That age or injury has hollow'd deep,
Where on his bed of wool and matted leaves
He has outslept the winter, ventures forth
To frisk awhile, and bask in the warm sun,
The squirrel, flippant, pert, and full of play.
He sees me, and at once, swift as a bird,
Ascends the neighb'ring beech; there whisks his brush,
And perks his ears, and stamps and scolds aloud,
With all the prettiness of feign'd alarm,
And anger insignificantly fierce.
The heart is hard in nature, and unfit
For human fellowship, as being void
Of sympathy, and therefore dead alike
To love and friendship both, that is not pleased
With sight of animals enjoying life,
Nor feels their happiness augment his own.
The bounding fawn that darts across the glade
When none pursues, through mere delight of heart,
And spirits buoyant with excess of glee;
The horse, as wanton and almost as fleet,
That skims the spacious meadow at full speed,
Then stops and snorts, and throwing high his heels,
Starts to the voluntary race again;
The very kine that gambol at high noon,
The total herd receiving first from one,
That leads the dance, a summons to be gay,
Though wild their strange vagaries, and uncouth,
Their efforts, yet resolved with one consent
To give such act and utt'rance as they may
To ecstasy too big to be suppress'd—
These, and a thousand images of bliss,
With which kind Nature graces ev'ry scene

Where cruel man defeats not her design,
Impart to the benevolent, who wish
All that are capable of pleasure pleased,
A far superior happiness to theirs,
The comfort of a reasonable joy.
Where England, stretch'd towards the setting sun,
Narrow and long, o'erlooks the western wave,
Dwelt young Misagathus; a scorner he
Of God and goodness, atheist in ostent,
Vicious in act, in temper savage-fierce.
He journey'd, and his chance was, as he went,
To join a trav'ller of far diff'rent note—
Evander, famed for piety, for years
Deserving honour, but for wisdom more.
Fame had not left the venerable man
A stranger to the manners of the youth,
Whose face, too, was familiar to his view.
Their way was on the margin of the land,
O'er the green summit of the rocks whose base
Beats back the roaring surge, scarce heard so high.
The charity that warm'd his heart was moved
At sight of the man-monster. With a smile
Gentle and affable, and full of grace,
As fearful of offending whom he wish'd
Much to persuade, he plied his ear with truths
Not harshly thunder'd forth or rudely press'd,
But, like his purpose, gracious, kind, and sweet.
And dost thou dream, th' impenetrable man
Exclaim'd, that me the lullabies of age,
And fantasies of dotards such as thou,
Can cheat, or move a moment's fear in me?
Mark now the proof I give thee, that the brave
Need no such aids as superstition lends
To steel their hearts against the dread of death.
He spoke, and to the precipice at hand

Push'd with a madman's fury. Fancy shrinks,
And the blood thrills and curdles at the thought
Of such a gulf as he design'd his grave.
But though the felon on his back could dare
The dreadful leap, more rational, his steed
Declined the death, and wheeling swiftly round,
Or ere his hoof had press'd the crumbling verge,
Baffled his rider, saved against his will.
The frenzy of the brain may be redress'd
By med'cine well applied, but without grace
The heart's insanity admits no cure.
Enraged the more by what might have reform'd
His horrible intent, again he sought
Destruction, with a zeal to be destroy'd,
With sounding whip and rowels dyed in blood.
But still in vain. The Providence that meant
A longer date to the far nobler beast,
Spared yet again th' ignobler for his sake.
And now, his prowess proved, and his sincere,
Incurable obduracy evinced,
His rage grew cool; and, pleased perhaps t' have earn'd
So cheaply the renown of that attempt,
With looks of some complacence he resumed
His road, deriding much the blank amaze
Of good Evander, still where he was left
Fixt motionless, and petrified with dread.
So on they fared; discourse on other themes
Ensuing, seem'd t' obliterate the past,
And tamer far for so much fury shown
(As is the course of rash and fiery men),
The rude companion smil'd as if transform'd.
But 'twas a transient calm. A storm was near,
An unsuspected storm. His hour was come.
The impious challenger of pow'r divine

Was now to learn that Heav'n, though slow to wrath,
Is never with impunity defied.
His horse, as he had caught his master's mood,
Snorting, and starting into sudden rage,
Unbidden, and not now to be controll'd,
Rush'd to the cliff, and having reach'd it, stood.
At once the shock unseated him ; he flew
Sheer o'er the craggy barrier, and, immersed
Deep in the flood, found, when he sought it not,
The death he had deserved, and died alone.
So God wrought double justice ; made the fool
The victim of his own tremendous choice,
And taught a brute the way to safe revenge.
I would not enter on my list of friends
(Though graced with polish'd manners and fine sense,
Yet wanting sensibility) the man
Who needlessly sets foot upon a worm.
An inadvertent step may crush the snail
That crawls at evening in the public path ;
But he that has humanity, forewarn'd,
Will tread aside, and let the reptile live.
The creeping vermin, loathsome to the sight,
And charged perhaps with venom, that intrudes
A visitor unwelcome into scenes
Sacred to neatness and repose, th' alcove,
The chamber, or refectory, may die.
A necessary act incurs no blame.
Not so when, held within their proper bounds,
And guiltless of offence, they range the air,
Or take their pastime in the spacious field.
There they are privileged ; and he that hunts
Or harms them there is guilty of a wrong,
Disturbs th' economy of Nature's realm,
Who, when she form'd, design'd them an abode.

The sum is this : if man's convenience, health,
Or safety interfere, his rights and claims
Are paramount, and must extinguish theirs.

. . . . . .

Sweet is the harp of prophecy ; too sweet
Not to be wrong'd by a mere mortal touch ;
Nor can the wonders it records be sung
To meaner music, and not suffer loss.
But when a poet, or when one like me,
Happy to rove among poetic flow'rs,
Though poor in skill to rear them, lights at last
On some fair theme, some theme divinely fair,
Such is the impulse and the spur he feels
To give it praise proportion'd to its worth,
That not t' attempt it, arduous as he deems
The labour, were a task more arduous still.
Oh scenes surpassing fable, and yet true,
Scenes of accomplish'd bliss ! which who can see,
Though but in distant prospect, and not feel
His soul refresh'd with foretaste of the joy ?
Rivers of gladness water all the earth,
And clothe all climes with beauty ; the reproach
Of barrenness is past. The fruitful field
Laughs with abundance, and the land, once lean
Or fertile only in its own disgrace,
Exults to see its thistly curse repeal'd.
The various seasons woven into one,
And that one season an eternal spring,
The garden fears no blight, and needs no fence,
For there is none to covet, all are full.
The lion and the libbard and the bear
Graze with the fearless flocks. All bask at noon
Together, or all gambol in the shade
Of the same grove, and drink one common stream.
Antipathies are none. No foe to man

Lurks in the serpent now. The mother sees,
And smiles to see, her infant's playful hand
Stretch'd forth to dally with the crested worm,
To stroke his azure neck, or to receive
The lambent homage of his arrowy tongue.
All creatures worship man, and all mankind
One Lord, one Father. Error has no place;
That creeping pestilence is driven away,
The breath of heav'n has chased it. In the heart
No passion touches a discordant string,
But all is harmony and love. Disease
Is not. The pure and uncontaminate blood
Holds its due course, nor fears the frost of age.
One song employs all nations: and all cry,
"Worthy the Lamb, for He was slain for us!"
The dwellers in the vales and on the rocks
Shout to each other, and the mountain tops
From distant mountains catch the flying joy,
Till nation after nation taught the strain,
Each rolls the rapturous Hosanna round.

THE DIVERTING HISTORY OF JOHN GILPIN;

SHOWING HOW HE WENT FARTHER THAN HE INTENDED, AND CAME SAFE HOME AGAIN.

[The history of "Gilpin" is told by Hayley:—"It happened in those years when his accomplished friend, Lady Austen, made a part of his little evening circle, that she observed him sinking into increasing dejection; it was her custom, on these occasions, to try all the resources of her sprightly powers for his immediate relief. She told him the story of John Gilpin (which had been treasured in her memory from her childhood), to dissipate the gloom of the passing hour. Its effect on the fancy of

Cowper had the air of enchantment. He informed her, the next morning, that convulsions of laughter, brought on by his recollection of her story, had kept him awake during the greater part of the night—that he had turned it into a ballad. So arose the pleasant poem of 'John Gilpin.' Mrs. Unwin sent it to the *Public Advertiser;* it was recited by Henderson, the comedian and mimic, and became the fashion of the fireside and the Court. The knight of the stone-bottles—as Cowper called him—has no rival except the knight of La Mancha. Mrs. Piozzi found more humour in this little ballad than in all *Gulliver's Travels.* And what humour it is!—how gay, sunshiny, and refreshing! and the mirth and the sunshine, too, are thoroughly English. Cowper talked of gracing Gilpin with a Greek and a Latin motto; he might as well have put a Cardinal's hat on Dr. Primrose. One improvement, however, he proposed, but did not perfectly execute. 'Here and there,' he told Unwin, 'I can give him a touch that, I think, will mend him, the language, in some places, not being quite so quaint and old-fashioned as it should be.'"]

JOHN GILPIN was a citizen
Of credit and renown,
A train-band Captain eke was he
Of famous London town.

John Gilpin's spouse said to her dear,
—Though wedded we have been
These twice ten tedious years, yet we
No holiday have seen.

To-morrow is our wedding-day,
And we will then repair
Unto the Bell at Edmonton,
All in a chaise and pair.

My sister and my sister's child,
Myself and children three,
Will fill the chaise, so you must ride
On horseback after we.

He soon replied,—I do admire
Of womankind but one,
And you are she, my dearest dear,
Therefore it shall be done.

I am a linen-draper bold,
As all the world doth know,
And my good friend the Calender
Will lend his horse to go.

Quoth Mrs. Gilpin,—That's well said,
And for that wine is dear,
We will be furnish'd with our own,
Which is both bright and clear.

John Gilpin kiss'd his loving wife;
O'erjoyed was he to find
That though on pleasure she was bent,
She had a frugal mind.

The morning came, the chaise was brought,
But yet was not allow'd
To drive up to the door, lest all
Should say that she was proud.

So three doors off the chaise was stay'd,
Where they did all get in,
Six precious souls, and all agog
To dash through thick and thin.

Smack went the whip, round went the wheels,
Were never folk so glad,
The stones did rattle underneath
As if Cheapside were mad.

John Gilpin at his horse's side,
Seized fast the flowing mane,
And up he got in haste to ride,
But soon came down again.

For saddle-tree scarce reach'd had he,
His journey to begin,
When, turning round his head, he saw
Three customers come in.

So down he came; for loss of time,
Although it grieved him sore,
Yet loss of pence, full well he knew,
Would trouble him much more.

'Twas long before the customers
Were suited to their mind,
When Betty screaming came downstairs,
"The wine is left behind."

God lack! quoth he, yet bring it me,
My leathern belt likewise,
In which I bear my trusty sword
When I do exercise.

Now Mistress Gilpin, careful soul,
Had two stone bottles found,
To hold the liquor that she loved,
And keep it safe and sound.

Each bottle had a curling ear,
Through which the belt he drew,
And hung a bottle on each side,
To make his balance true.

Then over all, that he might be
Equipp'd from top to toe,
His long red cloak, well brush'd and neat,
He manfully did throw.

Now see him mounted once again
Upon his nimble steed,
Full slowly pacing o'er the stones
With caution and good heed.

But, finding soon a smoother road
Beneath his well-shod feet,
The snorting beast began to trot,
Which gall'd him in his seat.

So "Fair and softly," John he cried,
But John he cried in vain;
That trot became a gallop soon,
In spite of curb and rein.

So stooping down, as needs he must
Who cannot sit upright,
He grasp'd the mane with both his hands,
And eke with all his might.

His horse, who never in that sort
Had handled been before,
What thing upon his back had got
Did wonder more and more.

Away went Gilpin, neck or nought,
Away went hat and wig!
He little dreamt when he set out
Of running such a rig!

The wind did blow, the cloak did fly,
Like streamer long and gay,
Till, loop and button failing both,
At last it flew away.

Then might all people well discern
The bottles he had slung,
A bottle swinging at each side,
As hath been said or sung.

The dogs did bark, the children scream'd,
Up flew the windows all,
And ev'ry soul cried out, Well done!
As loud as he could bawl.

Away went Gilpin—who but he?
His fame soon spread around—
He carries weight, he rides a race,
'Tis for a thousand pound!

And still as fast as he drew near,
'Twas wonderful to view,
How in a trice the turnpike-men
Their gates wide open threw.

And now, as he went bowing down
His reeking head full low,
The bottles twain behind his back
Were shatter'd at a blow.

Down ran the wine into the road,
Most piteous to be seen,
Which made his horse's flanks to smoke
As they had basted been.

But still he seem'd to carry weight,
With leathern girdle braced,

For all might see the bottle-necks
  Still dangling at his waist.

Thus all through merry Islington
  These gambols he did play,
And till he came unto the Wash
  Of Edmonton so gay.

And there he threw the wash about
  On both sides of the way,
Just like unto a trundling mop,
  Or a wild-goose at play.

At Edmonton his loving wife
  From the balcony spied
Her tender husband, wond'ring much
  To see how he did ride.

Stop, stop, John Gilpin !—Here's the house—
  They all at once did cry,
The dinner waits and we are tired :—
  Said Gilpin—So am I.

But yet his horse was not a whit
  Inclined to tarry there ;
For why ? his owner had a house
  Full ten miles off, at Ware.

So like an arrow swift he flew,
  Shot by an archer strong ;
So did he fly—which brings me to
  The middle of my song.

Away went Gilpin, out of breath,
  And sore against his will,
Till at his friend the Calender's
  His horse at last stood still.

The Calender, amazed to see
His neighbour in such trim,
Laid down his pipe, flew to the gate,
And thus accosted him :—

What news ? what news ? your tidings tell,
Tell me you must and shall—
Say why bare-headed you are come,
Or why you come at all ?

Now Gilpin had a pleasant wit,
And loved a timely joke,
And thus unto the Calender
In merry guise he spoke :—

I came because your horse would come ;
And if I well forebode,
My hat and wig will soon be here,
They are upon the road.

The Calender, right glad to find
His friend in merry pin,
Return'd him not a single word,
But to the house went in.

Whence straight he came with hat and wig :
A wig that flow'd behind,
A hat not much the worse for wear,
Each comely in its kind.

He held them up, and in his turn
Thus show'd his ready wit :—
My head is twice as big as yours,
They therefore needs must fit.

But let me scrape the dirt away
That hangs upon your face ;

And stop and eat, for well you may
Be in a hungry case.

Said John—It is my wedding-day,
And all the world would stare,
If wife should dine at Edmonton,
And I should dine at Ware.

So, turning to his horse, he said—
I am in haste to dine;
'Twas for your pleasure you came here,
You shall go back for mine.

Ah, luckless speech and bootless boast!
For which he paid full dear;
For, while he spake, a braying ass
Did sing most loud and clear.

Whereat his horse did snort, as he
Had heard a lion roar,
And gallop'd off with all his might,
As he had done before.

Away went Gilpin, and away
Went Gilpin's hat and wig!
He lost them sooner than at first,
For why?—they were too big!

Now Mistress Gilpin, when she saw
Her husband posting down
Into the country far away,
She pull'd out half-a-crown;

And thus unto the youth she said
That drove them to the Bell—
This shall be yours when you bring back
My husband safe and well.

The youth did ride, and soon did meet
  John coming back amain ;
Whom in a trice he tried to stop,
  By catching at his rein ;

But not performing what he meant,
  And gladly would have done,
The frighted steed he frighted more,
  And made him faster run.

Away went Gilpin, and away
  Went post-boy at his heels !—
The post-boy's horse right glad to miss
  The lumb'ring of the wheels.

Six gentlemen upon the road,
  Thus seeing Gilpin fly,
With post-boy scamp'ring in the rear,
  They raised the hue and cry :—

Stop thief ! stop thief !—a highwayman !
  Not one of them was mute ;
And all and each that pass'd that way
  Did join in the pursuit.

And now the turnpike gates again
  Flew open in short space ;
The toll-men thinking, as before,
  That Gilpin rode a race.

And so he did, and won it too,
  For he got first to town ;
Nor stopp'd till where he had got up
  He did again get down.

Now let us sing, Long live the king,
And Gilpin long live he;
And when he next doth ride abroad,
May I be there to see!

LOVE ABUSED.

WHAT is there in the vale of life
Half so delightful as a wife,
When friendship, love, and peace combine
To stamp the marriage-bond divine?
The stream of pure and genuine love
Derives its current from above;
And earth a second Eden shows,
Where'er the healing water flows:
But ah, if from the dykes and drains
Of sensual nature's fev'rish veins,
Lust, like a lawless headstrong flood,
Impregnated with ooze and mud,
Descending fast on every side
Once mingles with the sacred tide,
Farewell the soul-enliv'ning scene!
The banks that wore a smiling green,
With rank defilement overspread,
Bewail their flow'ry beauties dead.
The stream polluted, dark, and dull,
Diffused into a Stygian pool,
Through life's last melancholy years
Is fed with ever-flowing tears:
Complaints supply the zephyr's part,
And sighs that heave a breaking heart.

A POETICAL EPISTLE TO LADY AUSTEN.

DEAR ANNA,—Between friend and friend,
Prose answers every common end;
Serves, in a plain and homely way,
T' express th' occurrence of the day;
Our health, the weather, and the news;
What walks we take, what books we choose;
And all the floating thoughts we find
Upon the surface of the mind.

But when a poet takes the pen,
Far more alive than other men,
He feels a gentle tingling come
Down to his finger and his thumb,
Derived from Nature's noblest part,
The centre of a glowing heart:
And this is what the world, who knows
No flights above the pitch of prose,
His more sublime vagaries slighting,
Denominates an itch for writing.
No wonder I, who scribble rhyme
To catch the triflers of the time,
And tell them truths divine and clear,
Which, couch'd in prose, they will not hear—
Who labour hard t' allure and draw
The loiterers I never saw,
Should feel that itching, and that tingling,
With all my purpose intermingling,
To your intrinsic merit true,
When call'd t' address myself to you.

Mysterious are His ways, whose power,
Brings forth that unexpected hour,
When minds, that never met before,

Shall meet, unite, and part no more:
It is th' allotment of the skies,
The hand of the Supremely Wise,
That guides and governs our affections,
And plans and orders our connexions:
Directs us in our distant road,
And marks the bounds of our abode.
Thus we were settled when you found us,
Peasants and children all around us,
Not dreaming of so near a friend,
Deep in the abyss of Silver End.
Thus Martha, ev'n against her will,
Perch'd on the top of yonder hill;
And you, tho' you must needs prefer
The fairer scenes of sweet Sancerre,
Are come from distant Loire to choose
A cottage on the banks of Ouse.
This page of Providence quite new,
And now just op'ning to our view,
Employs our present thoughts and pains
To guess, and spell, what it contains:
But day by day, and year by year,
Will make the dark enigma clear;
And furnish us, perhaps, at last,
Like other scenes already past,
With proof that we, and our affairs,
Are part of a Jehovah's cares:
For God unfolds, by slow degrees,
The purport of His deep decrees;
Sheds every hour a clearer light
In aid of our defective sight;
And spreads, at length, before the soul
A beautiful and perfect whole,
Which busy man's inventive brain
Toils to anticipate, in vain.

Say, Anna, had you never known
The beauties of a rose full blown,
Could you, tho' luminous your eye,
By looking on the bud, descry,
Or guess, with a prophetic power,
The future splendour of the flower?
Just so, th' Omnipotent, who turns
The system of a world's concerns,
From mere minutiæ can educe
Events of most important use,
And bid a dawning sky display
The blaze of a meridian day.
The works of man tend, one and all,
As needs they must, from great to small;
And vanity absorbs at length
The monuments of human strength.
But who can tell how vast the plan
Which this day's incident began?
Too small, perhaps, the slight occasion
For our dim-sighted observation;
It pass'd unnoticed, as the bird
That cleaves the yielding air unheard,
And yet may prove, when understood,
A harbinger of endless good.

Not that I deem, or mean to call
Friendship a blessing cheap or small:
But merely to remark that ours,
Like some of Nature's sweetest flowers,
Rose from a seed of tiny size,
That seem'd to promise no such prize;
A transient visit intervening,
And made almost without a meaning,
(Hardly the effect of inclination,
Much less of pleasing expectation)

Produced a friendship, then begun,
That has cemented us in one;
And placed it in our power to prove,
By long fidelity and love,
That Solomon has wisely spoken:
"A threefold cord is not soon broken."

THE COLUBRIAD.

CLOSE by the threshold of a door nail'd fast
Three kittens sat; each kitten look'd aghast.
I, passing swift and inattentive by,
At the three kittens cast a careless eye;
Not much concern'd to know what they did there;
Not deeming kittens worth a poet's care.
But presently a loud and furious hiss
Caused me to stop, and to exclaim, "What's this?"
When lo! upon the threshold met my view,
With head erect, and eyes of fiery hue,
A viper, long as Count de Grasse's queue.
Forth from his head his forkèd tongue he throws,
Darting it full against the kitten's nose;
Who having never seen, in field or house,
The like, sat still and silent as a mouse:
Only projecting, with attention due,
Her whisker'd face, she ask'd him, "Who are you?"
On to the hall went I, with pace not slow,
But swift as lightning, for a long Dutch hoe:
With which well arm'd I hasten'd to the spot,
To find the viper, but I found him not.
And turning up the leaves and shrubs around,
Found only that he was not to be found.

But still the kittens, sitting as before,
Sat watching close the bottom of the door.
"I hope," said I, "the villain I would kill
Has slipp'd between the door and the door-sill;
And if I make despatch, and follow hard,
No doubt but I shall find him in the yard;"
For long ere now it should have been rehearsed,
'Twas in the garden that I found him first.
Ev'n there I found him; there the full-grown cat,
His head, with velvet paw, did gently pat;
As curious as the kittens erst had been
To learn what this phenomenon might mean.
Fill'd with heroic ardour at the sight,
And fearing every moment he would bite,
And rob our household of our only cat,
That was of age to combat with a rat;
With outstretch'd hoe I slew him at the door,
And taught him NEVER TO COME THERE NO MORE.

ON FRIENDSHIP.

"Amicitia nisi inter bonos esse non potest."—CICERO.

WHAT virtue can we name, or grace,
But men unqualified and base
Will boast it their possession?
Profusion apes the noble part
Of liberality of heart,
And dulness of discretion.

But, as the gem of richest cost
Is ever counterfeited most,
So, always, imitation

Employs the utmost skill she can
To counterfeit the faithful man,
The friend of long duration.

Some will pronounce me too severe—
But long experience speaks me clear;
Therefore, that censure scorning,
I will proceed to mark the shelves,
On which so many dash themselves,
And give the simple warning.

Youth, unadmonished by a guide,
Will trust to any fair outside:
An error soon corrected;
For who but learns, with riper years,
That man, when smoothest he appears,
Is most to be suspected.

But here again a danger lies;
Lest, thus deluded by our eyes,
And taking trash for treasure,
We should, when undeceived, conclude
Friendship, imaginary good,
A mere Utopian pleasure.

An acquisition, rather rare,
Is yet no subject of despair;
Nor should it seem distressful,
If either on forbidden ground,
Or where it was not to be found,
We sought it unsuccessful.

No friendship will abide the test
That stands on sordid interest
And mean self-love erected;

Nor such, as may awhile subsist
'Twixt sensualist and sensualist,
For vicious ends connected.

Who hopes a friend, should have a heart,
Himself, well furnished for the part,
And ready on occasion
To show the virtue that he seeks;
For 'tis an union that bespeaks
A just reciprocation.

A fretful temper will divide
The closest knot that may be tied,
By ceaseless sharp corrosion:
A temper, passionate and fierce,
May suddenly your joys disperse
At one immense explosion.

In vain the talkative unite
With hope of permanent delight:
The secret just committed
They drop through mere desire to prate,
Forgetting its important weight,
And by themselves outwitted.

How bright soe'er the prospect seems,
All thoughts of friendship are but dreams,
If envy chance to creep in;
An envious man, if you succeed,
May prove a dang'rous foe indeed,
But not a friend worth keeping.

As envy pines at good possess'd,
So jealousy looks forth distress'd,
On good that seems approaching;

And if success his steps attend,
Discerns a rival in a friend,
And hates him for encroaching.

Hence authors of illustrious name
(Unless belied by common fame)
Are sadly prone to quarrel;
To deem the wit a friend displays
So much of loss to their own praise,
And pluck each other's laurel.

A man renown'd for repartee,
Will seldom scruple to make free
With friendship's finest feeling;
Will thrust a dagger at your breast,
And tell you 'twas a special jest,
By way of balm for healing.

Beware of tatlers; keep your ear
Close stopt against the tales they hear,
Fruits of their own invention;
The separation of chief friends
Is what their kindness most intends;
Their sport is your dissension.

Friendship that wantonly admits
A joco-serious play of wits,
In brilliant altercation,
Is union such as indicates,
Like Hand-in-Hand Insurance plates,
Danger of conflagration.

Some fickle creatures boast a soul
True as the needle to the pole,
Yet shifting, like the weather,

The needle's constancy forego
For any novelty, and show
Its variations rather.

Insensibility makes some
Unseasonably deaf and dumb,
When most you need their pity;
'Tis waiting till the tears shall fall
From Gog and Magog in Guildhall,
Those playthings of the city.

The great and small but rarely meet
On terms of amity complete:
Th' attempt would scarce be madder,
Should any from the bottom hope,
At one huge stride, to reach the top
Of an erected ladder.

Courtier and patriot cannot mix
Their het'rogeneous politics
Without an effervescence,
Such as of salts with lemon-juice,
But which is rarely known t' induce,
Like that, a coalescence.

Religion should extinguish strife,
And make a calm of human life;
But even those, who differ
Only on topics left at large,
How fiercely will they meet and charge!
No combatants are stiffer.

To prove, alas! my main intent,
Needs no great cost of argument,
No cutting and contriving;

Seeking a real friend, we seem
T' adopt the chemist's golden dream
With still less hope of thriving.

Then judge, or ere you choose your man,
As circumspectly as you can,
And, having made election,
See that no disrespect of yours,
Such as a friend but ill endures,
Enfeeble his affection.

It is not timber, lead, and stone,
An architect requires alone,
To finish a great building;
The palace were but half complete,
Could he by any chance forget
The carving and the gilding.

As similarity of mind,
Or something not to be defined,
First rivets our attention;
So manners decent and polite,
The same we practised at first sight,
Must save it from declension.

The man who hails you Tom—or Jack,
And proves by thumping on your back,
His sense of your great merit,
Is such a friend, that one had need
Be very much his friend indeed,
To pardon, or to bear it.

Some friends make this their prudent plan—
"Say little, and hear all you can;"
Safe policy, but hateful;

So barren sands imbibe the show'r,
But render neither fruit nor flow'r,
Unpleasant and ungrateful.

They whisper trivial things, and small;
But, to communicate at all
Things serious, deem improper;
Their feculence and froth they show,
But keep the best contents below,
Just like a simm'ring copper.

These samples (for alas! at last
These are but samples, and a taste
Of evils yet unmention'd)
May prove the task, a task indeed,
In which 'tis much, if we succeed,
However well-intention'd.

Pursue the theme, and you shall find
A disciplined and furnish'd mind
To be at least expedient,
And, after summing all the rest,
Religion ruling in the breast
A principal ingredient.

True friendship has, in short, a grace,
More than terrestrial in its face,
That proves it Heav'n-descended:
Man's love of woman not so pure,
Nor, when sincerest, so secure
To last till life is ended.

ON THE LOSS OF THE *ROYAL GEORGE.*

WRITTEN WHEN THE NEWS ARRIVED, SEPTEMBER 1782.

TOLL for the brave!
The brave that are no more!
All sunk beneath the wave,
Fast by their native shore!

Eight hundred of the brave,
Whose courage well was tried,
Had made the vessel heel,
And laid her on her side.

A land breeze shook the shrouds,
And she was overset;
Down went the *Royal George*,
With all her crew complete.

Toll for the brave!
Brave Kempenfelt is gone;
His last sea-fight is fought;
His work of glory done.

It was not in the battle;
No tempest gave the shock;
She sprang no fatal leak;
She ran upon no rock.

His sword was in its sheath;
His fingers held the pen,
When Kempenfelt went down,
With twice four hundred men.

Weigh the vessel up,
Once dreaded by our foes !
And mingle with our cup
The tear that England owes.

SONG.

WHEN all within is peace,
How Nature seems to smile !
Delights that never cease,
The livelong day beguile.

From morn to dewy eve,
With open hand she showers
Fresh blessings, to deceive
And soothe the silent hours.

It is content of heart
Gives Nature power to please ;
The mind that feels no smart,
Enlivens all it sees ;

Can make a wintry sky
Seem bright as smiling May,
And evening's closing eye,
As peep of early day.

The vast majestic globe,
So beauteously array'd
In Nature's various robe,
With wondrous skill display'd,

Is to a mourner's heart
A dreary wild at best ;
It flutters to depart,
And longs to be at rest.

THE ROSE.

THE rose had been wash'd, just wash'd in a show'r,
Which Mary to Anna convey'd ;
The plentiful moisture encumber'd the flower,
And weigh'd down its beautiful head.

The cup was all fill'd, and the leaves were all wet,
And it seem'd, to a fanciful view,
To weep for the buds it had left with regret
On the flourishing bush where it grew.

I hastily seized it, unfit as it was
For a nosegay so dripping and drown'd,
And swinging it rudely, too rudely, alas !
I snapped it, it fell to the ground.

And such, I exclaimed, is the pitiless part
Some act by the delicate mind,
Regardless of wringing and breaking a heart,
Already to sorrow resigned.

This elegant rose, had I shaken it less,
Might have bloom'd with its owner awhile ;
And the tear, that is wiped with a little address,
May be follow'd perhaps by a smile.

ON THE SHORTNESS OF HUMAN LIFE.

SUNS that set and moons that wane,
Rise, and are restored again,
Stars that orient day subdues,
Night at her return renews.

Herbs and flowers, the beauteous birth
Of the genial womb of Earth,
Suffer but a transient death
From the winter's cruel breath.
Zephyr speaks; serener skies
Warm the glebe, and they arise.
We, alas! Earth's haughty kings,
We, that promise mighty things,
Losing soon life's happy prime,
Droop and fade in little time;
Spring returns, but not our bloom;
Still 'tis winter in the tomb.

EPITAPH ON JOHNSON.

HERE Johnson lies—a sage by all allow'd,
Whom to have bred, may well make England proud;
Whose prose was eloquence, by wisdom taught,
The graceful vehicle of virtuous thought;
Whose verse may claim—grave, masculine, and strong,
Superior praise to the mere poet's song;
Who many a noble gift from Heav'n possess'd,
And faith at last, alone worth all the rest.
O man, immortal by a double prize,
By fame on earth—by glory in the skies!

GRATITUDE.

ADDRESSED TO LADY HESKETH.

THIS cap, that so stately appears,
With ribbon-bound tassel on high,
Which seems by the crest that it rears
Ambitious of brushing the sky :
This cap to my cousin I owe,
She gave it, and gave me beside,
Wreathed into an elegant bow,
The ribbon with which it is tied.

This wheel-footed studying chair,
Contrived both for toil and repose,
Wide-elbow'd, and wadded with hair,
In which I both scribble and doze,
Bright-studded to dazzle the eyes,
And rival in lustre of that
In which, or astronomy lies,
Fair Cassiopeïa sat :

These carpets, so soft to the foot,
Caledonia's traffic and pride !
Oh spare them, ye knights of the boot,
Escaped from a cross-country ride !
This table, and mirror within,
Secure from collision and dust,
At which I oft shave cheek and chin,
And periwig nicely adjust :

This movable structure of shelves,
For its beauty admired, and use,
And charged with octavos and twelves,
The gayest I had to produce ;

Where flaming and scarlet and gold,
My poems enchanted I view,
And hope, in due time, to behold
My Iliad and Odyssey too:

This china, that decks the alcove,
Which here people call a buffet,
But what the gods call it above,
Has ne'er been reveal'd to us yet:
These curtains, that keep the room warm,
Or cool, as the season demands,
Those stoves that, for pattern and form,
Seem the labour of Mulciber's hands:

All these are not half that I owe
To One, from our earliest youth
To me ever ready to show
Benignity, friendship, and truth;
For Time, the destroyer declared
And foe of our perishing kind,
If even her face he has spared,
Much less could he alter her mind.

Thus compass'd about with the goods
And chattels of leisure and ease,
I indulge my poetical moods
In many such fancies as these;
And fancies I fear they will seem—
Poets' goods are not often so fine;
The poets will swear that I dream,
When I sing of the splendour of mine.

THE FLATTING-MILL.

AN ILLUSTRATION.

WHEN a bar of pure silver, or ingot of gold,
Is sent to be flatted or wrought into length,
It is pass'd between cylinders often, and roll'd
In an engine of utmost mechanical strength.

Thus tortured and squeezed, at last it appears
Like a loose heap of ribbon, a glittering show,
Like music it tinkles and rings in your ears,
And warm'd by the pressure is all in a glow.

This process achieved, it is doom'd to sustain
The thump-after-thump of a gold-beater's mallet,
And at last is of service, in sickness or pain,
To cover a pill from a delicate palate.

Alas for the Poet! who dares undertake
To urge reformation of national ill—
His head and his heart are both likely to ache
With the double employment of mallet and mill.

If he wish to instruct, he must learn to delight,
Smooth, ductile, and even, his fancy must flow,
Must tinkle and glitter like gold to the sight,
And catch in its progress a sensible glow.

After all he must beat it as thin and as fine
As the leaf that enfolds what an invalid swallows;
For truth is unwelcome, however divine,
And unless you adorn it, a nausea follows.

LINES

COMPOSED FOR A MEMORIAL OF ASHLEY COWPER, ESQ., IMMEDIATELY AFTER HIS DEATH.

FAREWELL! endued with all that could engage
All hearts to love thee, both in youth and age!
In prime of life, for sprightliness enroll'd
Among the gay, yet virtuous as the old;

In life's last stage (O blessings rarely found!)
Pleasant as youth with all its blossoms crown'd;
Through every period of this changeful state
Unchanged thyself—wise, good, affectionate!

Marble may flatter, and lest this should seem
O'ercharged with praises on so dear a theme,
Although thy worth be more than half suppress,
Love *shall* be satisfied, and veil the rest.

A TALE.

FOUNDED ON A FACT WHICH HAPPENED IN 1779.

WHERE Humber pours his rich commercial stream,
There dwelt a wretch, who breathed but to blaspheme.
In subterraneous caves his life he led,
Black as the mine, in which he wrought for bread.
When on a day, emerging from the deep,
A Sabbath-day (such Sabbaths thousands keep!)
The wages of his weekly toil he bore
To buy a cock—whose blood might win him more;

As if the noblest of the feather'd kind
Were but for battle and for death design'd ;
As if the consecrated hours were meant
For sport, to minds on cruelty intent ;
It chanced (such chances Providence obey)
He met a fellow-lab'rer on the way,
Whose heart the same desires had once inflam'd ;
But now the savage temper was reclaim'd.
Persuasion on his lips had taken place ;
For all plead well who plead the cause of grace.
His iron-heart with Scripture he assail'd,
Woo'd him to hear a sermon, and prevail'd.
His faithful bow the mighty preacher drew,
Swift, as the light'ning-glimpse, the arrow flew.
He wept ; he trembled ; cast his eyes around,
To find a worse than he ; but none he found.
He felt his sins, and wonder'd he should feel ;
Grace made the wound, and grace alone could heal.
  Now farewell oaths, and blasphemies, and lies,
He quits the sinner's for the martyr's prize.
That holy day was wash'd with many a tear,
Gilded with hope, yet shaded too by fear.
The next, his swarthy brethren of the mine
Learn'd by his alter'd speech—the change divine !
Laugh'd when they should have wept, and swore the
    day
Was nigh, when he would swear as fast as they.
"No" (said the penitent): "such words shall share
This breath no more ; devoted now to pray'r.
O ! if Thou seest (Thine eye the future sees)
That I shall yet again blaspheme, like these ;
Now strike me to the ground, on which I kneel,
Ere yet this heart relapses into steel ;
Now take me to that Heaven I once defied,
Thy presence, Thy embrace !" He spoke, and died !

STANZAS

SUBJOINED TO THE YEARLY BILL OF MORTALITY OF THE PARISH OF ALL-SAINTS, NORTHAMPTON, ANNO DOMINI, 1787.

"Pallida Mors æquo pulsat pede pauperum tabernas,
Regumque turres." —HORACE.

"Pale Death with equal foot strikes wide the door
Of royal halls and hovels of the poor."

WHILE thirteen moons saw smoothly run
The Nen's barge-laden wave,
All these, life's rambling journey done,
Have found their home, the grave.

Was man (frail always) made more frail
Than in foregoing years?
Did famine or did plague prevail,
That so much death appears?

No; these were vigorous as their sires,
Nor plague nor famine came;
This annual tribute Death requires,
And never waives his claim.

Like crowded forest-trees we stand,
And some are marked to fall;
The axe will smite at God's command,
And soon shall smite us all.

Green as the bay-tree, ever green,
With its new foliage on,
The gay, the thoughtless, have I seen,
I passed—and they were gone.

Read, ye that run, the awful truth
With which I charge my page!
A worm is in the bud of youth,
And at the root of age.

No present health can health insure,
Nor yet an hour to come;
No medicine, though it oft can cure,
Can always balk the tomb.

And oh! that humble as my lot,
And scorned as is my strain,
These truths, though known, too much forgot,
I may not teach in vain.

So prays your Clerk with all his heart,
And, ere he quits the pen,
Begs *you* for once to take *his* part,
And answer all—Amen!

THE POET'S NEW YEAR'S GIFT.

MARIA! I have every good
For thee wished many a time,
Both sad and in a cheerful mood,
But never yet in rhyme.

To wish thee fairer is no need,
More prudent or more sprightly,
Or more ingenuous, or more freed
From temper-flaws unsightly.

What favour then not yet possessed
  Can I for thee require,
In wedded love already blessed,
  To thy whole heart's desire?

None here is happy but in part;
  Full bliss is bliss divine;
There dwells some wish in every heart,
  And doubtless one in thine.

That wish, on some fair future day
  Which fate shall brightly gild
('Tis blameless, be it what it may),
  I wish it all fulfilled.

THE NEGRO'S COMPLAINT.

FORCED from home and all its pleasures,
  Afric's coast I left forlorn,
To increase a stranger's treasures,
  O'er the raging billows borne.
Men from England bought and sold me,
  Paid my price in paltry gold;
But, though slave they have enrolled me,
  Minds are never to be sold.

Still in thought as free as ever,
  What are England's rights, I ask,
Me from my delights to sever,
  Me to torture, me to task?
Fleecy locks and black complexion
  Cannot forfeit Nature's claim;
Skins may differ, but affection
  Dwells in white and black the same.

Why did all-creating Nature
Make the plant for which we toil?
Sighs must fan it, tears must water,
Sweat of ours must dress the soil.
Think, ye masters, iron-hearted,
Lolling at your jovial boards,
Think how many backs have smarted
For the sweets your cane affords.

Is there, as ye sometimes tell us,
Is there One who reigns on high?
Has He bid you buy and sell us,
Speaking from His throne, the sky?
Ask Him if your knotted scourges,
Matches, blood-extorting screws,
Are the means that duty urges
Agents of His will to use?

Hark! He answers!—wild tornadoes
Strewing yonder sea with wrecks,
Wasting towns, plantations, meadows,
Are the voice with which He speaks.
He, foreseeing what vexations
Afric's sons should undergo,
Fix'd their tyrants' habitations
Where His whirlwinds answer—No.

By our blood in Afric wasted,
Ere our necks received the chain;
By the miseries that we tasted,
Crossing in your barks the main;
By our sufferings, since ye brought us
To the man-degrading mart,
All sustain'd by patience, taught us
Only by a broken heart!

Deem our nation brutes no longer,
Till some reason ye shall find
Worthier of regard and stronger
Than the colour of our kind.
Slaves of gold, whose sordid dealings
Tarnish all your boasted powers,
Prove that you have human feelings,
Ere you proudly question ours!

THE DOG AND THE WATER LILY.

NO FABLE.

THE noon was shady, and soft airs
Swept Ouse's silent tide,
When 'scaped from literary cares,
I wandered on his side.

My spaniel, prettiest of his race,
And high in pedigree
(Two nymphs adorned with every grace
That spaniel found for me),

Now wantoned lost in flags and reeds,
Now starting into sight,
Pursued the swallow o'er the meads,
With scarce a slower flight.

It was the time when Ouse displayed
His lilies newly blown;
Their beauties I intent surveyed,
And one I wished my own.

With cane extended far I sought
To steer it close to land ;
But still the prize, though nearly caught,
Escaped my eager hand.

Beau marked my unsuccessful pains
With fixed considerate face,
And puzzling set his puppy brains
To comprehend the case.

But with a chirrup clear and strong,
Dispersing all his dream,
I thence withdrew, and followed long
The windings of the stream.

My ramble ended, I returned ;
Beau, trotting far before,
The floating wreath again discerned,
And plunging, left the shore.

I saw him, with that lily cropped,
Impatient swim to meet
My quick approach, and soon he dropped
The treasure at my feet.

Charmed with the sight, the world I cried,
Shall hear of this thy deed :
My dog shall mortify the pride
Of man's superior breed :

But chief myself I will enjoin,
Awake at duty's call,
To show a love as prompt as thine
To Him who gives me all.

ON THE DEATH OF MRS. THROCKMORTON'S BULLFINCH.

YE Nymphs, if e'er your eyes were red
With tears o'er hapless fav'rites shed,
Oh, share Maria's grief!
Her fav'rite, even in his cage,
(What will not hunger's cruel rage?)
Assassined by a thief.

Where Rhenus strays his vines among,
The egg was laid from which he sprung,
And though by Nature mute,
Or only with a whistle blessed,
Well taught he all the sounds expressed
Of flageolet or flute.

The honours of his ebon poll
Were brighter than the sleekest mole,
His bosom of the hue
With which Aurora decks the skies,
When piping winds shall soon arise
To sweep away the dew.

Above, below, in all the house,
Dire foe alike of bird and mouse,
No cat had leave to dwell;
And Bully's cage supported stood
On props of smoothest shaven wood,
Large-built and latticed well.

Well-latticed—but the grate, alas!
Not rough with wire of steel or brass,
For Bully's plumage sake,

But smooth with wands from Ouse's side,
With which, when neatly peeled and dried,
The swains their baskets make.

Night veiled the pole: all seemed secure:
When, led by instinct sharp and sure,
Subsistence to provide,
A beast forth sallied on the scout,
Long backed, long tailed, with whiskered snout,
And badger-coloured hide.

He, entering at the study door,
Its ample area 'gan explore;
And something in the wind
Conjectured, sniffing round and round,
Better than all the books he found,
Food chiefly for the mind.

Just then, by adverse fate impressed,
A dream disturbed poor Bully's rest:
In sleep he seemed to view
A rat fast clinging to the cage,
And, screaming at the sad presage,
Awoke and found it true.

For, aided both by ear and scent,
Right to his mark the monster went,—
Ah, Muse, forbear to speak,
Minute the horrors that ensued;
His teeth were strong, the cage was wood,—
He left poor Bully's beak.

O, had he made that too his prey!
That beak whence issued many a lay,
Of such mellifluous tone,

Might have repaid him well, I wote,
For silencing so sweet a throat,
Fast stuck within his own.

Maria weeps—the Muses mourn—
So when by Bacchanalians torn,
On Thracian Hebrus' side
The tree-enchanter Orpheus fell,
His head alone remained to tell
The cruel death he died.

THE NEEDLESS ALARM.

A TALE.

THERE is a field through which I often pass,
Thick overspread with moss and silky grass,
Adjoining close to Kilwick's echoing wood,
Where oft the bitch-fox hides her hapless brood,
Reserved to solace many a neighbouring squire,
That he may follow them through brake and brier,
Contusion hazarding of neck or spine,
Which rural gentlemen call sport divine.
A narrow brook, by rushy banks concealed,
Runs in a bottom, and divides the field;
Oaks intersperse it, that had once a head,
But now wear crests of oven-wood instead:
And where the land slopes to its watery bourn
Wide yawns a gulf beside a ragged thorn;
Bricks line the sides, but shivered long ago;
And horrid brambles intertwine below;
A hollow scooped, I judge, in ancient time,
For baking earth, or burning rock to lime.

Not yet the hawthorn bore her berries red,
With which the fieldfare, wintry guest, is fed ;
Nor autumn yet had brushed from every spray,
With her chill hand, the mellow leaves away ;
But corn was housed, and beans were in the stack,
Now therefore issued forth the spotted pack,
With tails high-mounted, ears hung low, and throats
With a whole gamut fill'd of heavenly notes,
For which, alas ! my destiny severe,
Though ears she gave me two, gave me no ear.
The sun accomplishing his early march,
His lamp now planted on heaven's topmost arch,
When, exercise and air my only aim,
And heedless whither, to that field I came,
Ere yet with ruthless joy the happy hound
Told hill and dale that Reynard's track was found,
Or with the high-raised horn's melodious clang
All Kilwick and all Dinglederry rang.
Sheep grazed the field ; some with soft bosom pressed
The herb as soft, while nibbling stray'd the rest ;
Nor noise was heard but of the hasty brook,
Struggling, detained in many a petty nook.
All seemed so peaceful, that, from them conveyed,
To me their peace by kind contagion spread.
But when the huntsman, with distended cheek,
'Gan make his instrument of music speak,
And from within the wood that crash was heard,
Though not a hound from whom it burst appear'd,
The sheep recumbent, and the sheep that grazed,
All huddling into phalanx, stood and gazed,
Admiring, terrified, the novel strain,
Then coursed the field around, and coursed it round again :
But recollecting with a sudden thought,
That flight in circles urged advanced them nought,

They gathered close around the old pit's brink,
And thought again—but knew not what to think.
The man to solitude accustomed long,
Perceives in everything that lives a tongue;
Not animals alone, but shrubs and trees
Have speech for him, and understood with ease;
After long drought, when rains abundant fall,
He hears the herbs and flowers rejoicing all;
Knows what the freshness of their hue implies,
How glad they catch the largess of the skies;
But, with precision nicer still, the mind
He scans of every locomotive kind;
Birds of all feather, beasts of every name,
That serve mankind, or shun them, wild or tame;
The looks and gestures of their griefs and fears
Have all articulation in his ears;
He spells them true by intuition's light,
And needs no glossary to set him right.
This truth premised was needful as a text,
To win due credence to what follows next.
Awhile they mused; surveying every face,
Thou hadst supposed them of superior race;
Their periwigs of wool and fears combined,
Stamped on each countenance such marks of mind,
That sage they seemed, as lawyers o'er a doubt,
Which, puzzling long, at last they puzzle out;
Or academic tutors, teaching youths,
Sure ne'er to want them, mathematic truths;
When thus a mutton statelier than the rest,
A ram, the ewes and wethers sad addressed:
"Friends! we have lived too long. I never heard
Sounds such as these, so worthy to be feared.
Could I believe, that winds for ages pent
In earth's dark womb have found at last a vent,
And from their prison-house below arise,

With all these hideous howlings to the skies,
I could be much composed, nor should appear,
For such a cause, to feel the slightest fear.
Yourselves have seen, what time the thunders rolled
All night, me resting quiet in the fold.
Or heard we that tremendous bray alone,
I could expound the melancholy tone ;
Should deem it by our old companion made,
The ass ; for he, we know, has lately strayed,
And, being lost, perhaps, and wandering wide,
Might be supposed to clamour for a guide.
But ah ! those dreadful yells what soul can hear,
That owns a carcass, and not quake for fear ?
Demons produce them doubtless, brazen-clawed,
And fanged with brass the demons are abroad ;
I hold it therefore wisest and most fit
That, life to save, we leap into the pit."
Him answered then his loving mate and true,
But more discreet than he, a Cambrian ewe.
"How ? leap into the pit our life to save ?
To save our life leap all into the grave ?
For can we find it less ? Contemplate first
The depth how awful ! falling there, we burst :
Or should the brambles interposed our fall
In part abate, that happiness were small ;
For with a race like theirs no chance I see
Of peace or ease to creatures clad as we.
Meantime, noise kills not. Be it Dapple's bray,
Or be it not, or be it whose it may,
And rush those other sounds, that seem by tongues
Of demons uttered, from whatever lungs,
Sounds are but sounds, and, till the cause appear,
We have at least commodious standing here.
Come fiend, come fury, giant, monster, blast
From earth or hell, we can but plunge at last."

While thus she spake, I fainter heard the peals,
For Reynard, close attended at his heels
By panting dog, tired man, and spattered horse,
Through mere good fortune, took a different course.
The flock grew calm again, and I, the road
Following that led me to my own abode,
Much wonder'd that the silly sheep had found
Such cause of terror in an empty sound,
So sweet to huntsman, gentleman, and hound.

MORAL.

Beware of desperate steps. The darkest day,
Live till to-morrow, will have passed away.

ON THE RECEIPT OF MY MOTHER'S PICTURE, OUT OF NORFOLK,

THE GIFT OF MY COUSIN, ANNE BODHAM.

O THAT those lips had language! Life has passed
With me but roughly since I heard thee last.
Those lips are thine—thy own sweet smile I see,
The same that oft in childhood solaced me;
Voice only fails, else how distinct they say,
"Grieve not, my child, chase all thy fears away!"
The meek intelligence of those dear eyes
(Blest be the art that can immortalise,
The art that baffles Time's tyrannic claim
To quench it!) here shines on me still the same.
Faithful remembrancer of one so dear,
O welcome guest, though unexpected here!
Who bids me honour with an artless song,
Affectionate, a mother lost so long,

I will obey, not willingly alone,
But gladly, as the precept were her own;
And, while that face renews my filial grief,
Fancy shall weave a charm for my relief,
Shall steep me in Elysian reverie,
A momentary dream, that thou art she.
My mother! when I learnt that thou wast dead,
Say, wast thou conscious of the tears I shed?
Hovered thy spirit o'er thy sorrowing son,
Wretch even then, life's journey just begun?
Perhaps thou gav'st me, though unfelt, a kiss;
Perhaps a tear, if souls can weep in bliss—
Ah, that maternal smile!—it answers—Yes.
I heard the bell tolled on thy burial day,
I saw the hearse that bore thee slow away,
And, turning from my nursery window, drew
A long, long sigh, and wept a last adieu!
But was it such?—It was.—Where thou art gone,
Adieus and farewells are a sound unknown.
May I but meet thee on that peaceful shore,
The parting word shall pass my lips no more!
Thy maidens, grieved themselves at my concern,
Oft gave me promise of thy quick return;
What ardently I wished, I long believed,
And, disappointed still, was still deceived;
By expectation every day beguiled,
Dupe of to-morrow even from a child.
Thus many a sad to-morrow came and went,
Till, all my stock of infant sorrows spent,
I learnt at last submission to my lot,
But though I less deplored thee, ne'er forgot.
Where once we dwelt our name is heard no more,*
Children not thine have trod my nursery floor;

* The rectory at Great Berkhampstead, where he was born.

And where the gardener Robin, day by day,
Drew me to school along the public way,
Delighted with my bauble coach, and wrapped
In scarlet mantle warm, and velvet capped,
'Tis now become a history little known,
That once we called the pastoral house our own.
Short-lived possession ! But the record fair,
That memory keeps of all thy kindness there,
Still outlives many a storm, that has effaced
A thousand other themes less deeply traced.
Thy nightly visits to my chamber made,
That thou mightst know me safe and warmly laid ;
Thy morning bounties ere I left my home,
The biscuit or confectionary plum ;
The fragrant waters on my cheeks bestowed
By thy own hand, till fresh they shone and glowed :
All this, and more endearing still than all,
Thy constant flow of love, that knew no fall,
Ne'er roughened by those cataracts and breaks,
That humour interposed too often makes ;
All this still legible in memory's page,
And still to be so to my latest age,
Adds joy to duty, makes me glad to pay
Such honours to thee as my numbers may ;
Perhaps a frail memorial, but sincere,
Not scorned in heaven, though little noticed here.
  Could Time, his flight reversed, restore the hours,
When, playing with thy vesture's tissued flowers,
The violet, the pink, and jessamine,
I pricked them into paper with a pin
(And thou wast happier than myself the while,
Wouldst softly speak, and stroke my head, and smile),
Could those few pleasant days again appear,
Might one wish bring them, would I wish them here ?
I would not trust my heart ;—the dear delight

Seems so to be desired, perhaps I might.—
But no—what here we call our life is such,
So little to be loved, and thou so much,
That I should ill requite thee to constrain
Thy unbound spirit into bonds again.
  Thou, as a gallant bark from Albion's coast
(The storms all weathered and the ocean crossed),
Shoots into port at some well-havened isle,
Where spices breathe, and brighter seasons smile,
There sits quiescent on the floods, that show
Her beauteous form reflected clear below,
While airs impregnated with incense play
Around her, fanning light her streamers gay;
So thou, with sails how swift! hast reached the shore,
"Where tempests never beat nor billows roar;"
And thy loved consort on the dangerous tide
Of life long since has anchored by thy side.
But me, scarce hoping to attain that rest,
Always from port withheld, always distressed—
Me howling blasts drive devious, tempest-tossed,
Sails ripped, seams opening wide, and compass lost,
And day by day some current's thwarting force
Sets me more distant from a prosperous course.
Yet O, the thought that thou art safe, and he!
That thought is joy, arrive what may to me.
My boast is not that I deduce my birth
From loins enthroned, and rulers of the earth;
But higher far my proud pretensions rise—
The son of parents passed into the skies.
And now, farewell!—Time unrevoked has run
His wonted course, yet what I wished is done.
By contemplation's help, not sought in vain,
I seem to have lived my childhood o'er again;
To have renewed the joys that once were mine,
Without the sin of violating thine.

And while the wings of Fancy still are free,
And I can view this mimic form of thee,
Time has but half succeeded in his theft—
Thyself removed, thy power to soothe me left.

HYMN

FOR THE USE OF THE SUNDAY SCHOOL AT OLNEY.

HEAR, Lord, the song of praise and pray'r,
In Heaven Thy dwelling-place,
From infants made the public care,
And taught to seek Thy face!

Thanks for Thy Word and for Thy Day;
And grant us, we implore,
Never to waste in sinful play
Thy holy Sabbaths more.

Thanks that we hear—but oh! impart
To each desires sincere,
That we may listen with our heart,
And learn as well as hear.

For if vain thoughts the mind engage
Of elder far than we,
What hope that at our heedless age
Our minds should e'er be free?

Much hope, if Thou our spirits take
Under Thy gracious sway,
Who canst the wisest wiser make,
And babes as wise as they.

Wisdom and bliss Thy Word bestows,
A sun that ne'er declines ;
And be Thy mercies show'r'd on those
Who placed is where it shines.

ANECDOTE OF HOMER.

Certain potters, while they were busied in baking their ware, seeing Homer at a small distance, and having heard much said of his wisdom, called to him, and promised him a present of their commodity, and of such other things as they could afford, if he would sing to them, when he sang as follows :—

PAY me my price, Potters ! and I will sing.
Attend, O Pallas ! and with lifted arm
Protect their oven ; let the cups and all
The sacred vessels blacken well, and baked
With good success, yield them both fair renown
And profit, whether in the market sold
Or street, and let no strife ensue between us.
But, oh ye Potters ! if with shameless front
Ye falsify your promise, then I leave
No mischief uninvoked t' avenge the wrong.
Come, Syntrips, Smaragus, Sabactes, come,
And Asbetus, nor let your direst dread
Omodamus, delay ! Fire seize your house,
May neither house nor vestibule escape ;
May ye lament to see confusion mar
And mingle the whole labour of your hands,
And may a sound fill all your ovens, such
As of a horse grinding his provender,
While all your pots and flagons bounce within.
Come hither, also, daughter of the sun,
Circe, the sorceress, and with thy drugs

Poison themselves, and all that they have made!
Come also, Chiron, with thy num'rous troop
Of Centaurs, as well those who died beneath
The club of Hercules, as who escaped,
And stamp their crockery to dust; down fall
Their chimney; let them see it with their eyes,
And howl to see the ruin of their art,
While I rejoice; and if a potter stoop
To peep into his furnace, may the fire
Flash in his face and scorch it, that all men
Observe, thenceforth, equity and good faith.

THE FOUR AGES.

BRIEF FRAGMENT OF AN EXTENSIVE PROJECTED POEM.

"I COULD be well content, allow'd the use
Of past experience, and the wisdom glean'd
From worn-out follies, now acknowledged such,
To recommence life's trial, in the hope
Of fewer errors, on a second proof!"

Thus, while grey ev'ning lull'd the wind, and call'd
Fresh odours from the shrubb'ry at my side,
Taking my lonely winding walk, I mused,
And held accustom'd conference with my heart;
When from within it thus a voice replied.

"Couldst thou in truth? and art thou taught at length
This wisdom, and but this, from all the past?
Is not the pardon of thy long arrear,
Time wasted, violated laws, abuse

Of talents, judgments, mercies, better far
Than opportunity vouchsafed to err
With less excuse, and haply, worse effect?"

I heard, and acquiesced: then to and fro
Oft pacing, as the mariner his deck,
My grav'lly bounds, from self to human-kind
I pass'd, and next consider'd—what is man?

Knows he his origin? can he ascend
By reminiscence to his earliest date?
Slept he in Adam? and in those from him
Through num'rous generations, till he found
At length his destined moment to be born?
Or was he not, till fashion'd in the womb? [toil'd
Deep myst'ries both! which schoolmen much have
To unriddle, and have left them myst'ries still.

It is an evil incident to man,
And of the worst, that unexplored he leaves
Truths useful and attainable with ease,
To search forbidden deeps, where myst'ry lies
Not to be solved, and useless, if it might.
Myst'ries are food for angels; they digest
With ease, and find them nutriment; but man,
While yet he dwells below, must stoop to glean
His manna from the ground, or starve, and die.

THE JUDGMENT OF THE POETS.

TWO nymphs, both nearly of an age,
Of numerous charms possess'd,
A warm dispute once chanced to wage,
Whose temper was the best.

The worth of each had been complete,
  Had both alike been mild :
But one, although her smile was sweet,
  Frown'd oft'ner than she smiled.

And in her humour, when she frown'd,
  Would raise her voice and roar,
And shake with fury to the ground
  The garland that she wore.

The other was of gentler cast,
  From all such frenzy clear,
Her frowns were seldom known to last,
  And never proved severe.

To poets of renown in song
  The nymphs referr'd the cause,
Who, strange to tell, all judged it wrong,
  And gave misplaced applause.

They gentle call'd, and kind and soft,
  The flippant and the scold,
And though she changed her mood so oft,
  That failing left untold.

No judges, sure, were e'er so mad,
  Or so resolved to err—
In short, the charms her sister had
  They lavish'd all on her.

Then thus the God whom fondly they
  Their great Inspirer call,
Was heard, one genial summer's day,
  To reprimand them all.

"Since thus ye have combined," he said,
"My fav'rite nymph to slight,
Adorning May, that peevish maid,
With June's undoubted right,

"The minx shall, for your folly's sake,
Still prove herself a shrew,
Shall make your scribbling fingers ache,
And pinch your noses blue."

THE RETIRED CAT.

A POET'S cat, sedate and grave
As poet well could wish to have,
Was much addicted to inquire
For nooks to which she might retire,
And where, secure as mouse in chink,
She might repose, or sit and think.
I know not where she caught the trick—
Nature perhaps herself had cast her
In such a mould PHILOSOPHIQUE,
Or else she learn'd it of her master.
Sometimes ascending, *debonnair*,
An apple-tree, or lofty pear,
Lodg'd with convenience in the fork,
She watch'd the gard'ner at his work;
Sometimes her ease and solace sought
In an old empty wat'ring pot,
There wanting nothing, save a fan,
To seem some nymph in her sedan,
Apparell'd in exactest sort,
And ready to be borne to court.

But love of change it seems has place,
Not only in our wiser race,
Cats also feel, as well as we,
That passion's force, and so did she.
Her climbing, she began to find,
Expos'd her too much to the wind,
And the old utensil of tin
Was cold and comfortless within:
She therefore wish'd instead of those
Some place of more serene repose,
Where neither cold might come, nor air
Too rudely wanton with her hair,
And sought it in the likeliest mode
Within her master's snug abode.

A draw'r, it chanc'd, at bottom lined
With linen of the softest kind,
With such as merchants introduce
From India, for the ladies' use,
A draw'r impending o'er the rest,
Half open in the topmost chest,
Of depth enough, and none to spare,
Invited her to slumber there;
Puss, with delight beyond expression,
Surveyed the scene and took possession.
Recumbent at her ease ere long,
And lull'd by her own humdrum song,
She left the cares of life behind,
And slept as she would sleep her last;
When in came, housewifely inclined,
The chambermaid, and shut it fast,
By no malignity impell'd,
But all unconscious whom it held.

Awaken'd by the shock, (cried puss)
"Was ever cat attended thus!

The open drawer was left, I see,
Merely to prove a nest for me,
For soon as I was well composed
Then came the maid and it was closed.
How smooth these 'kerchiefs and how sweet!
Oh what a delicate retreat!
I will resign myself to rest
Till Sol, declining in the west,
Shall call to supper, when, no doubt,
Susan will come and let me out."

The evening came, the sun descended,
And puss remained still unattended.
The night roll'd tardily away
(With her indeed, 'twas never day),
The sprightly morn her course renew'd,
The evening grey again ensued,
And puss came into mind no more
Than if entomb'd the day before.
With hunger pinch'd, and pinch'd for room,
She now presaged approaching doom,
Nor slept a single wink, or purr'd,
Conscious of jeopardy incurr'd.

That night, by chance, the poet watching
Heard an inexplicable scratching;
His noble heart went pit-a-pat,
And to himself he said—"What's that?"
He drew the curtain at his side,
And forth he peep'd, but nothing spied;
Yet, by his ear directed, guess'd
Something imprison'd in the chest,
And doubtful what, with prudent care,
Resolv'd it should continue there.
At length, a voice which well he knew,

A long and melancholy mew,
Saluting his poetic ears,
Consoled him and dispell'd his fears ;
He left his bed, he trod the floor,
He 'gan in haste the draw'rs explore,
The lowest first, and without stop
The rest in order to the top.
For 'tis a truth well-known to most,
That whatsoever thing is lost,
We seek it, ere it come to light,
In ev'ry cranny but the right.
Forth skipp'd the cat, not now replete
As erst with airy self-conceit,
Nor in her own fond apprehension
A theme for all the world's attention ;
But modest, sober, cur'd of all
Her notions hyperbolical,
And wishing for a place of rest
Anything rather than a chest.
Then stepp'd the poet into bed
With this reflection in his head.

YARDLEY OAK.

SURVIVOR sole, and hardly such, of all
That once liv'd here, thy brethren, at my birth
(Since which I number threescore winters past),
A shatter'd vet'ran, hollow-trunk'd perhaps,
As now, and with excoriate forks deform,
Relics of ages ! could a mind, imbued
With truth from Heaven, created thing adore,
I might with reverence kneel, and worship thee.

It seems idolatry with some excuse,
When our forefather Druids in their oaks
Imagined sanctity. The conscience, yet
Unpurified by an authentic act
Of amnesty, the meed of blood divine,
Lov'd not the light, but, gloomy, into gloom
Of thickest shades, like Adam after taste
Of fruit proscribed, as to a refuge, fled.
By thee I might correct, erroneous oft,
The clock of history, facts and events
Timing more punctual, unrecorded facts
Recov'ring, and misstated setting right—
Desp'rate attempt, till trees shall speak again!
Time made thee what thou wast, king of the woods;
And Time hath made thee what thou art—a cave
For owls to roost in. Once thy spreading boughs
O'erhung the champaign; and the num'rous flocks
That grazed it, stood beneath that ample cope
Uncrowded, yet safe-shelter'd from the storm.
No flock frequents thee now. Thou hast outlived
Thy popularity, and art become
(Unless verse rescue thee awhile) a thing
Forgotten, as the foliage of thy youth.
While thus through all the stages thou hast push'd
Of treeship—first a seedling, hid in grass;
Then twig; then sapling; and, as cent'ry roll'd
Slow after century, a giant-bulk
Of girth enormous, with moss-cushion'd root
Upheaved above the soil, and sides emboss'd
With prominent wens globose—till at the last
The rottenness, which time is charged to inflict
On other mighty ones, found also thee.
What exhibitions various hath the world
Witness'd of mutability in all
That we account most durable below!

Change is the diet on which we subsist,
Created changeable, and change at last
Destroys them. Skies uncertain now the heat
Transmitting cloudless, and the solar beam
Now quenching in a boundless sea of clouds—
Calm and alternate storm, moisture and drought,
Invigorate by turns the springs of life
In all that live, plant, animal, and man,
And in conclusion mar them. Nature's threads,
Fine passing thought e'en in her coarsest works,
Delight in agitation, yet sustain,
The force that agitates, not unimpair'd;
But, worn by frequent impulse, to the cause
Of their best tone their dissolution owe.
Thought cannot spend itself, comparing still
The great and little of thy lot, thy growth
From almost nullity into a state
Of matchless grandeur, and declension thence,
Slow, into such magnificent decay.
Time was, when, settling on thy leaf, a fly
Could shake thee to thy root—and time has been
When tempests could not. At thy firmest age
Thou hadst within thy bole solid contents,
That might have ribb'd the sides and plank'd the deck
Of some flagg'd admiral; and tortuous arms,
The shipwright's darling treasure, didst present
To the four-quarter'd winds, robust and bold,
Warp'd into tough knee-timber, many a load!
But the axe spared thee. In those thriftier days
Oaks fell not, hewn by thousands to supply
The bottomless demands of contest, waged
For senatorial honours. Thus to time
The task was left to whittle thee away
With his sly scythe, whose ever nibbling edge,

Noiseless, an atom, and an atom more,
Disjoining from the rest, has, unobserved,
Achieved a labour, which had far and wide,
By man perform'd, made all the forest ring.
  Embowell'd now, and of thy ancient self
Possessing naught but the scoop'd rind, that seem'd
A huge throat calling to the clouds for drink,
Which it would give in rivulets to thy root,
Thou temptest none, but rather much forbidd'st
The feller's toil, which thou could'st ill requite.
Yet is thy root sincere, sound as the rock,
A quarry of stout spurs, and knotted fangs,
Which, crook'd into a thousand whimsies, clasp
The stubborn soil, and hold thee still erect
  So stands a kingdom whose foundation yet
Fails not, in virtue and in wisdom laid.
Though all the superstructure, by the tooth
Pulverised of venality, a shell
Stands now, and semblance only of itself!
  Thine arms have left thee. Winds have rent them off
Long since, the rovers of the forest wild, [left
With bow and shaft, have burnt them Some have
A splinter'd stump, bleach'd to a snowy white;
And some, memorial none where once they grew.
But life still lingers in thee, and puts forth
Proof not contemptible of what she can,
Even where death predominates. The spring
Finds thee not less alive to her sweet force,
Than yonder upstarts of the neighb'ring wood,
So much thy juniors, who their birth received
Half a millennium since the date of thine.
  But since, although well qualified by age
To teach, no spirit dwells in thee, nor voice
May be expected from thee, seated here

On thy distorted root, with hearers none,
Or prompter, save the scene, I will perform
Myself the oracle, and will discourse
In my own ear such matter as I may.
  One man alone, the father of us all,
Drew not his life from woman : never gazed,
With mute unconsciousness of what he saw,
On all around him ; learn'd not by degrees,
Nor owed articulation to his ear ;
But, moulded by his Maker into man,
At once upstood intelligent, survey'd
All creatures, with precision understood
Their purport, uses, properties, assign'd
To each his name significant, and, fill'd
With love and wisdom, render'd back to Heav'n
In praise harmonious the first air he drew.
He was excused the penalties of dull
Minority. No tutor charged his hand
With the thought-tracing quill, or tasked his mind
With problems. History, not wanted yet,
Lean'd on her elbow watching Time, whose course,
Eventful, should supply her with a theme.

ON A PLANT OF VIRGIN'S-BOWER,

DESIGNED TO COVER A GARDEN-SEAT.

THRIVE, gentle plant ! and weave a bow'r
  For Mary and for me,
And deck with many a splendid flow'r
  Thy foliage large and free.

Thou cam'st from Eartham, and wilt shade
  (If truly I divine)

Some future day th' illustrious head
Of him who made thee mine.

Should Daphne show a jealous frown,
And Envy seize the bay,
Affirming none so fit to crown
Such honour'd brows as they,

Thy cause with zeal we shall defend,
And with convincing pow'r;
For why should not the Virgin's Friend
Be crown'd with Virgin's Bow'r?

AN EPITAPH. 1792.

HERE lies one who never drew
Blood himself, yet many slew;
Gave the gun its aim, and figure
Made in field, yet ne'er pulled trigger;
Armèd men have gladly made
Him their guide, and him obey'd;
At his signified desire,
Would advance, present, and fire—
Stout he was, and large of limb,
Scores have fled in spite of him:
And to all this fame he rose
Only following his nose.
Neptune was he call'd; not he
Who controls the boist'rous sea,
But of happier command,
Neptune of the furrow'd land;
And, your wonder vain to shorten,
Pointer to *Sir John Throckmorton.*

TO MY COUSIN, ANNE BODHAM,

ON RECEIVING FROM HER A NETWORK PURSE, MADE BY HERSELF, MAY 4, 1793.

MY gentle Anne, whom heretofore,
When I was young, and thou no more
Than plaything for a nurse,
I danced and fondled on my knee,
A kitten both in size and glee,
I thank thee for my purse.

Gold pays the worth of all things here;
But not of love:—that gem's too dear
For richest rogues to win it;
I, therefore, as a proof of love,
Esteem thy present far above
The best things kept within it.

TO MRS. UNWIN.

MARY! I want a lyre with other strings,
Such aid from Heav'n as some have feign'd they drew,
An eloquence scarce given to mortals, new
And undebased by praise of meaner things,
That ere through age or woe I shed my wings,
I may record thy worth with honour due,
In verse as musical as thou art true,
And that immortalises whom it sings.
But thou hast little need. There is a book
By Seraphs writ with beams of heavenly light,

On which the eyes of God not rarely look,
A chronicle of actions just and bright ;
There all thy deeds, my faithful Mary, shine,
And, since thou own'st that praise, I spare thee mine.

A TALE.

IN Scotland's realm, where trees are few,
Nor even shrubs abound ;
But where, however bleak the view,
Some better things are found ;

For husband there and wife may boast
Their union undefiled,
And false ones are as rare almost
As hedge-rows in the wild ;

In Scotland's realm, forlorn and bare,
The hist'ry chanced of late—
This hist'ry of a wedded pair,
A chaffinch and his mate.

The spring drew near, each felt a breast
With genial instinct fill'd :
They pair'd, and would have built a nest,
But found not where to build.

The heaths uncover'd and the moors,
Except with snow and sleet,
Sea-beaten rocks and naked shores,
Could yield them no retreat.

Long time a breeding-place they sought,
Till both grew vex'd and tired;
At length a ship arriving brought
The good so long desired.

A ship?—could such a restless thing
Afford them place of rest?
Or was the merchant charged to bring
The homeless birds a nest?

Hush—silent hearers profit most—
This racer of the sea
Proved kinder to them than the coast,
It served them with a tree.

But such a tree! 'twas shaven deal,
The tree they call a mast,
And had a hollow with a wheel
Through which the tackle pass'd.

Within that cavity aloft
Their roofless home they fixed,
Form'd with materials neat and soft,
Bents, wool, and feathers mixt.

Four iv'ry eggs soon pave its floor,
With russet specks bedight—
The vessel weighs, forsakes the shore,
And lessens to the sight.

The mother-bird is gone to sea,
As she had changed her kind
But goes the male? Far wiser, he
Is doubtless left behind?

No—Soon as from the shore he saw
The wingèd mansion move,
He flew to reach it, by the law
Of never-failing love.

Then perching at his consort's side,
Was briskly borne along,
The billows and the blast defied,
And cheer'd her with a song.

The seaman with sincere delight
His feather'd shipmates eyes,
Scarce less exulting in the sight
Than when he tows a prize.

For seamen much believe in signs,
And from a chance so new
Each some approaching good divines,
And may his hopes be true!

Hail, honour'd land! a desert where
Not even birds can hide,
Yet parent of this loving pair
Whom nothing could divide.

And ye who, rather than resign
Your matrimonial plan,
Were not afraid to plough the brine
In company with man.

For whose lean country much disdain
We English often show,
Yet from a richer nothing gain
But wantonness and woe;

Be it your fortune, year by year,
The same resource to prove,
And may ye, sometimes landing here,
Instruct us how to love!

ON A SPANIEL CALLED "BEAU" KILLING A YOUNG BIRD.

A Spaniel, Beau, that fares like you,
Well-fed, and at his ease,
Should wiser be than to pursue
Each trifle that he sees.

But you have kill'd a tiny bird,
Which flew not till to-day,
Against my orders, whom you heard
Forbidding you the prey.

Nor did you kill that you might eat,
And ease a doggish pain,
For him, though chased with furious heat,
You left where he was slain.

Nor was he of the thievish sort,
Or one whom blood allures,
But innocent was all his sport
Whom you have torn for yours.

My dog, what remedy remains,
Since, teach you all I can,
I see you, after all my pains,
So much resemble Man?

BEAU'S REPLY.

SIR, when I flew to seize the bird,
In spite of your command,
A louder voice than yours I heard,
And harder to withstand.

You cried—forbear—but in my breast
A mightier cried—proceed—
'Twas Nature, Sir, whose strong behest
Impell'd me to the deed.

Yet much as Nature I respect,
I ventured once to break
(As you perhaps may recollect)
Her precept for your sake;

And when your linnet on a day,
Passing his prison door,
Had fluttered all his strength away,
And panting pressed the floor,

Well knowing him a sacred thing,
Not destined to my tooth,
I only kiss'd his ruffled wing,
And lick'd the feathers smooth.

Let my obedience then excuse
My disobedience now,
Nor some reproof yourself refuse
From your aggrieved Bow-wow.

If killing birds be such a crime
(Which I can hardly see),
What think you, Sir, of killing time
With verse addressed to me?

TO MARY.

THE twentieth year is well nigh past,
Since first our sky was overcast,
Ah, would that this might be the last!
My Mary!

Thy spirits have a fainter flow,
I see thee daily weaker grow—
'Twas my distress that brought thee low,
My Mary!

Thy needles, once a shining store,
For my sake restless heretofore,
Now rust disused, and shine no more,
My Mary!

For though thou gladly wouldst fulfil
The same kind office for me still,
Thy sight now seconds not thy will,
My Mary!

But well thou play'dst the housewife's part,
And all thy threads with magic art
Have wound themselves about this heart,
My Mary!

Thy indistinct expressions seem
Like language utter'd in a dream;
Yet me they charm, whate'er the theme,
My Mary!

Thy silver locks, once auburn bright,
Are still more lovely in my sight
Than golden beams of orient light,
My Mary!

For could I view nor them nor thee,
What sight worth seeing could I see?
The sun would rise in vain for me,
My Mary!

Partakers of thy sad decline,
Thy hands their little force resign;
Yet gently prest, press gently mine,
My Mary!

Such feebleness of limbs thou prov'st,
That now at every step thou mov'st
Upheld by two, yet still thou lov'st,
My Mary!

And still to love, though prest with ill,
In wintry age to feel no chill,
With me is to be lovely still,
My Mary!

But ah, by constant heed I know,
How oft the sadness that I show,
Transforms thy smiles to looks of woe,
My Mary!

And should my future lot be cast
With much resemblance of the past,
Thy worn-out heart will break at last,
My Mary!

THE FAITHFUL BIRD.

THE greenhouse is my summer seat;
My shrubs displaced from that retreat
Enjoyed the open air;

Two goldfinches, whose sprightly song
Had been their mutual solace long,
Lived happy prisoners there.

They sang as blithe as finches sing
That flutter loose on golden wing,
And frolic where they list;
Strangers to liberty, 'tis true,
But that delight they never knew,
And therefore never missed.

But Nature works in every breast,
With force not easily suppress'd;
And Dick felt some desires,
That, after many an effort vain,
Instructed him at length to gain
A pass between his wires.

The open windows seem'd t' invite
The freeman to a farewell flight:
But Tom was still confined;
And Dick, although his way was clear,
Was much too generous and sincere
To leave his friend behind,

So settling on his cage, by play,
And chirp, and kiss, he seemed to say,
You must not live alone;—
Nor would he quit that chosen stand
Till I, with slow and cautious hand,
Returned him to his own.

O ye, who never taste the joys
Of Friendship, satisfied with noise,
Fandango, ball, and rout!
Blush when I tell you how a bird
A prison with a friend preferred
To liberty without.

THE POPLAR FIELD.

THE poplars are felled; farewell to the shade,
And the whispering sound of the cool colonnade!
The winds play no longer and sing in the leaves,
Nor Ouse on his bosom their image receives.

Twelve years have elapsed since I first took a view
Of my favourite field, and the bank where they grew;
And now in the grass behold they are laid,
And the tree is my seat that once lent me a shade!

The blackbird has fled to another retreat,
Where the hazels afford him a screen from the heat,
And the scene where his melody charmed me before
Resounds with his sweet-flowing ditty no more.

My fugitive years are all hasting away,
And I must ere long lie as lowly as they,
With a turf on my breast, and a stone at my head,
Ere another such grove shall arise in its stead.

'Tis a sight to engage me, if anything can,
To muse on the perishing pleasures of man;
Though his life be a dream, his enjoyments, I see,
Have a being less durable even than he.

ON THE HIGH PRICE OF FISH.

COCOA-NUT naught,
Fish too dear,
None must be bought
For us that are here:

No lobster on earth,
That ever I saw,
To me would be worth
Sixpence a claw.

So, dear Madam, wait
Till fish can be got
At a reasonable rate,
Whether lobster or not;

Till the French and the Dutch
Have quitted the seas,
And then send as much
And as oft as you please.

VERSES PRINTED BY HIMSELF, ON A FLOOD AT OLNEY, 12TH AUGUST 1782.

TO watch the storms, and hear the sky
Give all our almanacks the lie:
To shake with cold, and see the plains
In autumn drowned with wintry rains;
'Tis thus I spend my moments here,
And wish myself a Dutch mynheer;
I then should have no need of wit,
For lumpish Hollander unfit!
Nor should I then repine at mud,
Or meadows deluged with a flood;
But in a bog live well content,
And find it just my element:
Should be a clod, and not a man;
Nor wish in vain for Sister Ann,

With charitable aid to drag
My mind out of its proper quag;
Should have the genius of a boor,
And no ambition to have more.

MARY AND JOHN.

IF John marries Mary, and Mary alone,
'Tis a very good match between Mary and John.
Should John wed a score, oh the claws and the scratches!
It can't be a match:—'tis a bundle of matches.

TO SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS.

DEAR PRESIDENT, whose art sublime
Gives perpetuity to time,
And bids transactions of a day,
That fleeting hours would waft away
To dark futurity, survive,
And in unfading beauty live—
You cannot with a grace decline
A special mandate of the Nine—
Yourself, whatever task you choose,
So much indebted to the Muse.

Thus say the sisterhood: We come—
Fix well your pallet on your thumb,
Prepare the pencil and the tints—
We come to furnish you with hints.
French disappointments, British glory,
Must be the subject of the story.

First strike a curve, a graceful bow,
Then slope it to a point below;
Your outline easy, airy, light,
Filled up becomes a paper kite.
Let independence, sanguine, horrid,
Blaze like a meteor in the forehead:
Beneath (but lay aside your graces)
Draw six-and-twenty rueful faces,
Each with a staring, steadfast eye,
Fixed on his great and good ally.
France flies the kite—'tis on the wing—
Britannia's lightning cuts the string.
The wind that raised it, ere it ceases,
Just rends it into thirteen pieces,
Takes charge of every fluttering sheet,
And lays them all at George's feet.
Iberia, trembling from afar,
Renounces the confederate war;
Her efforts and her arts o'ercome,
France calls her shatter'd navies home.
Repenting Holland learns to mourn
The sacred treaties she has torn;
Astonishment and awe profound
Are stamp'd upon the nations round;
Without one friend, above all foes,
Britannia gives the world repose.

PAIRING TIME ANTICIPATED

A FABLE.

I SHALL not ask Jean Jacques Rousseau
If birds confabulate or no;
'Tis clear that they were always able
To hold discourse, at least in fable;

And even the child who knows no better
Than to interpret by the letter,
A story of a cock and bull,
Must have a most uncommon skull.

It chanced then on a winter's day,
But warm and bright and calm as May,
The birds conceiving a design
To forestall sweet St. Valentine,
In many an orchard, copse, and grove
Assembled on affairs of love,
And with much twitter and much chatter
Began to agitate the matter.
At length a Bullfinch, who could boast
More years and wisdom than the most,
Entreated, opening wide his beak,
A moment's liberty to speak ;
And silence publicly enjoined,
Delivered briefly thus his mind :

"My friends ! be cautious how ye treat
The subject upon which we meet ;
I fear we shall have winter yet."

A Finch, whose tongue knew no control,
With golden wing and satin poll,
A last year's bird, who ne'er had tried
What marriage means, thus pert replied :

"Methinks the gentleman," quoth she,
"Opposite in the apple tree,
By his good will would keep us single
Till yonder heaven and earth shall mingle ;
Or (which is likelier to befall)
Till death exterminate us all.
I marry without more ado ;
My dear Dick Redcap, what say you ?"

Dick heard, and tweedling, ogling, bridling,
Turning short round, strutting, and sideling,
Attested, glad, his approbation
Of an immediate conjugation.
Their sentiments so well expressed,
Influenced mightily the rest;
All paired, and each pair built a nest.
But though the birds were thus in haste,
The leaves came on not quite so fast,
And destiny, that sometimes bears
An aspect stern on man's affairs,
Not altogether smiled on theirs.
The wind, of late breathed gently forth,
Now shifted east, and east by north;
Bare trees and shrubs but ill, you know,
Could shelter them from rain or snow:
Stepping into their nests, they paddled,
Themselves were chilled, their eggs were addled;
Soon every father bird and mother
Grew quarrelsome, and pecked each other,
Parted without the least regret,
Except that they had ever met,
And learned in future to be wiser
Than to neglect a good adviser.

MORAL.

Misses! the tale that I relate
This lesson seems to carry—
Choose not alone a proper mate,
But proper time to marry.

EPITAPH ON A HARE.

HERE lies, whom hound did ne'er pursue,
Nor swifter greyhound follow,
Whose foot ne'er tainted morning dew,
Nor ear heard huntsman's halloo.

Old Tiney, surliest of his kind,
Who, nursed with tender care,
And to domestic bounds confined,
Was still a wild Jack hare.

Though duly from my hand he took
His pittance every night,
He did it with a jealous look,
And, when he could, would bite.

His diet was of wheaten bread,
And milk, and oats, and straw;
Thistles, or lettuces instead,
With sand to scour his maw.

On twigs of hawthorn he regaled,
On pippin's russet peel,
And, when his juicy salads failed,
Sliced carrot pleased him well.

A Turkey carpet was his lawn,
Whereon he loved to bound,
To skip and gambol like a fawn,
And swing his rump around.

His frisking was at evening hours,
For then he lost his fear,
But most before approaching showers,
Or when a storm drew near.

Eight years and five round rolling moons
He thus saw steal away,
Dozing out all his idle noons,
And every night at play.

I kept him for his humour's sake,
For he would oft beguile
My heart of thoughts that made it ache,
And force me to a smile.

But now beneath his walnut shade
He finds his long last home,
And waits, in snug concealment laid,
Till gentler Puss shall come.

He, still more aged, feels the shocks
From which no care can save,
And, partner once of Tiney's box,
Must soon partake his grave.

SONNET TO A YOUNG LADY ON HER BIRTHDAY.

DEEM not, sweet rose, that bloom'st 'midst many a thorn,
Thy friend, though to a cloister's shade consigned,
Can e'er forget the charms he left behind,
Or pass unheeded this auspicious morn!
In happier days to brighter prospects born,
Oh, tell thy thoughtless sex, the virtuous mind,
Like thee, content in every state may find,
And look on Folly's pageantry with scorn;

To steer with nicest art betwixt the extreme
Of idle mirth, and affectation coy;
To blend good sense with elegance and ease;
To bid Affliction's eye no longer stream;
Is thine; best gift the unfailing source of joy,
The guide to pleasures which can never cease!

WRITTEN IN A QUARREL

(THE DELIVERY OF IT PREVENTED BY A RECONCILIATION).

THINK, Delia, with what cruel haste
Our fleeting pleasures move,
Nor heedless thus in sorrow waste
The moments due to love;

Be wise, my fair, and gently treat
These few that are our friends;
Think, thus abused, what sad regret
Their speedy flight attends!

Sure in those eyes I loved so well,
And wished so long to see,
Anger I thought could never dwell,
Or anger aimed at me.

No bold offence of mine I knew
Should e'er provoke your hate;
And, early taught to think you true,
Still hoped a gentler fate.

With kindness bless the present hour,
Or oh! we meet in vain!
What can we do in absence more
Than suffer and complain?

Fated to ills beyond redress,
We must endure our woe;
The days allowed us to possess,
'Tis madness to forego.

THE SYMPTOMS OF LOVE.

WOULD my Delia know if I love, let her take
My last thought at night and the first when I wake;
When my prayers and best wishes preferred for her sake.

Let her guess what I muse on, when rambling alone
I stride o'er the stubble each day with my gun,
Never ready to shoot till the covey is flown.

Let her think what odd whimsies I have in my brain,
When I read one page over and over again,
And discover at last that I read it in vain.

Let her say why so fixed and so steady my look,
Without ever regarding the person who spoke,
Still affecting to laugh, without hearing the joke.

Or why when with pleasure her praises I hear
(That sweetest of melody sure to my ear),
I attend, and at once inattentive appear.

And lastly, when summoned to drink to my flame,
Let her guess why I never once mention her name,
Though herself and the woman I love are the same.

At Berkhampstead.

WRITTEN AFTER LEAVING HER AT NEW BURNS.

HOW quick the change from joy to woe!
How chequered is our lot below!
Seldom we view the prospect fair,
Dark clouds of sorrow, pain, and care
(Some pleasing intervals between),
Scowl over more than half the scene.
Last week with Delia, gentle maid,
Far hence in happier fields I strayed,
While on her dear enchanting tongue
Soft sounds of grateful welcome hung,
For absence had withheld it long.
"Welcome, my long-lost love," she said,
"E'er since our adverse fates decreed
That we must part, and I must mourn
Till once more blessed by thy return,
Love, on whose influence I relied
For all the transports I enjoyed,
Has played the cruel tyrant's part,
And turned tormentor to my heart.
But let me hold thee to my breast,
Dear partner of my joy and rest,
And not a pain, and not a fear,
Or anxious doubt shall enter there."
Happy, thought I, the favoured youth,
Blessed with such undissembled truth!
Five suns successive rose and set,
And saw no monarch in his state,
Wrapped in the blaze of majesty,
So free from every care as I.

Next day the scene was overcast ;
Such day till then I never passed.
For on that day, relentless fate !
Delia and I must separate.
Yet ere we looked our last farewell,
From her dear lips this comfort fell :
" Fear not that time, where'er we rove,
Or absence, shall abate my love."
And can I doubt, my charming maid,
As unsincere what you have said ?
Banished from thee to what I hate,
Dull neighbours and insipid chat,
No joy to cheer me, none in view,
But the dear hope of meeting you ;
And that through passion's optic seen,
With ages interposed between ;
Blessed with the kind support you give,
'Tis by your promised truth I live ;
How deep my woes, how fierce my flame,
You best may tell, who feel the same.

R. S. S.

ALL-WORSHIPPED Gold ! thou mighty mystery !
Say by what name shall I address thee, rather,
Our blessing or our bane ? Without thy aid,
The generous pangs of pity but distress
The human heart, that fain would feel the bliss
Of blessing others ; and, enslaved by thee,
Far from relieving woes which others feel,
Misers oppress themselves. Our blessing then
With virtue when possessed ; without, our bane.

If in my bosom unperceived there lurk
The deep-sown seeds of avarice or ambition,
Blame me, ye great ones (for I scorn your censure),
But let the generous and the good commend me;
That to my Delia I direct them all,
The worthiest object of a virtuous love.
Oh! to some distant scene, a willing exile
From the wild uproar of this busy world,
Were it my fate with Delia to retire;
With her to wander through the sylvan shade,
Each morn, or o'er the moss-imbrownèd turf,
Where, bless'd as the prime parents of mankind
In their own Eden, we would envy none;
But, greatly pitying whom the world calls happy,
Gently spin out the silken thread of life;
While from her lips attentive I receive
The tenderest dictates of the purest flame,
And from her eyes (where soft complacence sits
Illumined with radiant beams of sense),
Tranquillity beyond a monarch's reach.
Forgive me, Heaven, this only avarice
My soul indulges; I confess the crime—
(If to esteem, to covet such perfection
Be criminal). Oh grant me Delia! grant me wealth,
Wealth to alleviate, not increase my wants;
And grant me virtue, without which nor wealth
Nor Delia can avail to make me blessed.

WRITTEN IN A FIT OF ILLNESS.

R. S. S.

IN these sad hours, a prey to ceaseless pain,
While feverish pulses leap in every vein,
When each faint breath the last short effort seems

Of life just parting from my feeble limbs ;
How wild soe'er my wandering thoughts may be,
Still, gentle Delia, still they turn on thee !
At length if, slumbering to a short repose,
A sweet oblivion frees me from my woes,
Thy form appears, thy footsteps I pursue,
Through springy vales, and meadows washed in dew ;
Thy arm supports me to the fountain's brink,
Where by some secret power forbid to drink,
Gasping with thirst, I view the tempting flood
That flies my touch, or thickens into mud ;
Till thine own hands immerged the goblet dips,
And bears it streaming to my burning lips.
There borne aloft on fancy's wing we fly,
Like souls embodied to their native sky ;
Now every rock, each mountain disappears :
And the round earth an even surface wears ;
When lo ! the force of some resistless weight
Bears me straight down from that pernicious height ;
Parting, in vain our struggling arms we close ;
Abhorred forms, dire phantoms interpose ;
With trembling voice on thy loved name I call ;
And gulfs yawn ready to receive my fall.
From these fallacious visions of distress
I wake ; nor are my real sorrows less.
Thy absence, Delia, heightens every ill,
And gives e'en trivial pains the power to kill.
Oh ! wert thou near me ; yet that wish forbear !
'Twere vain, my love,—'twere vain to wish thee near ;
Thy tender heart would heave with anguish too,
And by partaking, but increase my woe.
Alone I'll grieve, till gloomy sorrow past,
Health, like the cheerful day-spring, comes at last—
Comes fraught with bliss to banish every pain,
Hope, joy, and peace, and Delia in her train !

DISAPPOINTMENT.

DOOMED as I am, in solitude to waste
The present moments, and regret the past;
Deprived of every joy I valued most,
My friend torn from me, and my mistress lost,
Call not this gloom I wear, this anxious mien,
The dull effect of humour or of spleen!
Still, still I mourn, with each returning day,
Him snatched by fate in early youth away;
And her through tedious years of doubt and pain,
Fixed in her choice and faithful—but in vain!
Whose eye ne'er yet refused the wretch a tear;
O prone to pity, generous, and sincere,
Whose heart the real claim of friendship knows,
Nor thinks a lover's are but fancied woes;
See me—ere yet my destined course half done,
Cast forth a wanderer on a world unknown!
See me neglected on the world's rude coast,
Each dear companion of my voyage lost!
Nor ask why clouds of sorrow shake my brow,
And ready tears wait only leave to flow!
Why all that soothes a heart from anguish free,
All that delights the happy—palls with me!

ODE.

SUPPOSED TO BE WRITTEN ON THE MARRIAGE OF A FRIEND.

THOU magic lyre, whose fascinating sound
Seduced the savage monsters from their cave,
Drew rocks and trees, and forms uncouth around,
And bade wild Hebrus hush his listening wave;

No more the undulating warblings flow
O'er Thracian wilds of everlasting snow !

Awake to sweeter sounds, thou magic lyre,
And paint a lover's bliss—a lover's pain !
Far nobler triumphs now thy notes inspire,
For see, Eurydice attends thy strain ;
Her smile, a prize beyond the conjurer's aim,
Superior to the cancelled breath of fame.

From her sweet brow to chase the gloom of care,
To check the tear that dims the beaming eye,
To bid her heart the rising sigh forbear,
And flush her orient cheek with brighter joy,
In that dear breast soft sympathy to move,
And touch the springs of rapture and of love.

Ah me ! how long bewildered and astray,
Lost and benighted, did my footsteps rove,
Till sent by heaven to cheer my pathless ray,
A star arose—the radiant star of love.
The god propitious joined our willing hands,
And Hymen wreathed us in his rosy bands.

Yet not the beaming eye, or placid brow,
Or golden tresses, hid the subtle dart ;
To charms superior far than those I bow,
And nobler worth enslaves my vanquished heart,
The beauty, elegance, and grace combined,
Which beam transcendent from that angel mind.

While vulgar passions, meteors of a day,
Expire before the chilling blasts of age,
Our holy flame with pure and steady ray,
Its glooms shall brighten, and its pangs assuage ;
By Virtue (sacred vestal) fed, shall shine,
And warm our fainting souls with energy divine.

SONG.

NO more shall hapless Celia's ears
Be fluttered with the cries
Of lovers drowned in floods of tears,
Or murdered by her eyes;
No serenades to break her rest,
Nor songs her slumbers to molest,
With my fa, la, la.

The fragrant flowers that once would bloom
And flourish in her hair,
Since she no longer breathes perfume
Their odours to repair,
Must fade, alas! and wither now,
As placed on any common brow,
With my fa, la, la.

Her lip, so winning and so meek,
No longer has its charms;
As well she might by whistling seek
To lure us to her arms;
Affected once, 'tis real now,
As her forsaken gums may show,
With my fa, la, la.

The down that on her chin so smooth
So lovely once appeared,
That, too, has left her with her youth,
Or sprouts into a beard;
As fields, so green when newly sown,
With stubble stiff are overgrown,
With my fa, la, la.

Then, Celia, leave your apish tricks,
And change your girlish airs,
For ombre, snuff, and politics,
Those joys that suit your years;
No patches can lost youth recall,
Nor whitewash prop a tumbling wall,
With my fa, la, la.

A SONG.

THE sparkling eye, the mantling cheek,
The polished front, the snowy neck,
How seldom we behold in one!
Glossy locks, and brow serene,
Venus' smiles, Diana's mien,
All meet in you, and you alone.

Beauty, like other powers, maintains
Her empire, and by union reigns;
Each single feature faintly warms;
But where at once we view displayed
Unblemished grace, the perfect maid
Our eyes, our ears, our heart alarms.

So when on earth the god of day
Obliquely sheds his tempered ray,
Through convex orbs the beams transmit,
The beams that gently warmed before,
Collected, gently warm no more,
But glow with more prevailing heat.

A SONG.

ON the green margin of the brook
Despairing Phyllida reclined,
Whilst every sigh, and every look,
Declared the anguish of her mind.

Am I less lovely then? (she cries,
And in the waves her form surveyed);
Oh yes, I see my languid eyes,
My faded cheek, my colour fled;
These eyes no more like lightning pierced,
These cheeks grew pale, when Damon first
His Phyllida betrayed.

The rose he in his bosom wore,
How oft upon my breast was seen!
And when I kissed the drooping flower,
Behold, he cries, it blooms again!
The wreaths that bound my braided hair,
Himself next day was proud to wear
At church, or on the green.

While thus sad Phyllida lamented,
Chance brought unlucky Thyrsis on:
Unwillingly the nymph consented,
But Damon first the cheat begun.
She wiped the fallen tears away,
Then sighed and blushed, as who should say,
Ah! Thyrsis, I am won.

THE CERTAINTY OF DEATH.

MORTALS ! around your destined heads
Thick fly the shafts of Death,
And lo ! the savage spoiler spreads
A thousand toils beneath.

In vain we trifle with our fate ;
Try every art in vain ;
At best we but prolong the date,
And lengthen out our pain.

Fondly we think all danger fled,
For death is ever nigh ;
Outstrips our unavailing speed,
Or meets us as we fly.

Thus the wrecked mariner may strive
Some desert shore to gain,
Secure of life, if he survive
The fury of the main.

But there, to famine doomed a prey,
Finds the mistaken wretch,
He but escaped the troubled sea
To perish on the beach.

Since then in vain we strive to guard
Our frailty from the foe,
Lord, let me live not unprepared
To meet the fatal blow !

THE CASTAWAY.

OBSCUREST night involved the sky,
The Atlantic billows roared,
When such a destined wretch as I,
Washed headlong from on board,
Of friends, of hope, of all bereft,
His floating home for ever left.

No braver chief could Albion boast
Than he with whom he went,
Nor ever ship left Albion's coast
With warmer wishes sent.
He loved them both, but both in vain;
Nor him beheld, nor her again.

Not long beneath the whelming brine,
Expert to swim, he lay;
Nor soon he felt his strength decline,
Or courage died away;
But waged with death a lasting strife,
Supported by despair of life.

He shouted; nor his friends had failed
To check the vessel's course,
But so the furious blast prevailed,
That pitiless perforce
They left their outcast mate behind,
And scudded still before the wind.

Some succour yet they could afford;
And, such as storms allow,
The cask, the coop, the floated cord,
Delayed not to bestow:
But he, they knew, nor ship nor shore,
Whate'er they gave, should visit more.

Nor, cruel as it seemed, could he
  Their haste himself condemn,
Aware that flight, in such a sea,
  Alone could rescue them;
Yet bitter felt it still to die
Deserted, and his friends so nigh.

He long survives who lives an hour
  In ocean, self-upheld:
And so long he, with unspent power,
  His destiny repelled:
And ever as the minutes flew,
Entreated help, or cried—"Adieu!"

At length, his transient respite past,
  His comrades, who before
Had heard his voice in every blast,
  Could catch the sound no more:
For then, by toil subdued, he drank
The stifling wave, and then he sank.

No poet wept him; but the page
  Of narrative sincere,
That tells his name, his worth, his age,
  Is wet with Anson's tear:
And tears by bards or heroes shed
Alike immortalise the dead.

I therefore purpose not, or dream,
  Descanting on his fate,
To give the melancholy theme
  A more enduring date:
But misery still delights to trace
Its semblance in another's case.

No voice divine the storm allayed,
  No light propitious shone,

When, snatched from all effectual aid,
We perished, each alone:
But I, beneath a rougher sea,
And whelmed in deeper gulfs than he.

Written March 20, 1799; being the last original poem of the author. It is founded on a story in Anson's Voyage, which Cowper had not looked into for nearly twenty years.

Translations of the Latin and Italian Poems of Milton.

ON THE APPROACH OF SPRING.

WRITTEN IN THE AUTHOR'S TWENTIETH YEAR.

TIME, never wand'ring from his annual round,
Bids Zephyr breathe the Spring, and thaw the ground;
Bleak winter flies, new verdure clothes the plain,
And earth assumes her transient youth again.
Dream I, or also to the Spring belong
Increase of genius and new pow'rs of song?
Spring gives them, and, how strange soe'er it seems,
Impels me now to some harmonious themes.
Catalia's mountain and the forkèd hill,
By day, by night, my raptured fancy fill;
My bosom burns and heaves, I hear within
A sacred sound, that prompts me to begin.
Lo! Phœbus comes, with his bright hair he blends
The radiant laurel wreath; Phœbus descends;

I mount, and, undepress'd by cumb'rous clay,
Through cloudy regions win my easy way ;
Rapt, through poetic shadowy haunts I fly :
The shrines all open to my dauntless eye,
My spirit searches all the realms of light,
And no Tartarean gulfs elude my sight.
By this ecstatic trance—this glorious storm
Of inspiration—what will it perform ?
Spring claims the verse, that with his influence glows,
And shall be paid with what himself bestows.
Thou, veiled with op'ning foliage, lead'st the throng
Of feather'd minstrels, Philomel ! in song ;
Let us, in concert, to the season sing,
Civic and sylvan heralds of the Spring !
With notes triumphant Spring's approach declare !
To Spring, ye Muses, annual tribute bear !
The Orient left, and Æthiopia's plains,
The Sun now northward turns his golden reins ;
Night creeps not now ; yet rules with gentle sway ;
And drives her dusky horrors swift away ;
Now less fatigued, on this ethereal plain
Boötes follows his celestial wain :
And now the radiant sentinels above,
Less num'rous, watch around the courts of Jove,
For, with the night, force, ambush, slaughter fly,
And no gigantic guilt alarms the sky.
Now haply says some shepherd, while he views,
Recumbent on a rock, the redd'ning dews,
This night, this surely, Phœbus miss'd the fair,
Who stops his chariot by her am'rous care.
Cynthia, delighted by the morning's glow,
Speeds to the woodland, and resumes her bow ;
Resigns her beams, and, glad to disappear,
Blesses his aid, who shortens her career.
Come—Phœbus cries—Aurora come—too late

Thou ling'rest, slumb'ring, with thy wither'd mate!
Leave him, and to Hymettus' top repair!
Thy darling Cephalus expects thee there.
The goddess, with a blush, her love betrays,
But mounts, and driving rapidly, obeys.
Earth now desires thee, Phœbus! and t' engage
Thy warm embrace, casts off the guise of age;
Desires thee, and deserves; for who so sweet,
When her rich bosom courts thy genial heat?
Her breath imparts to ev'ry breeze that blows,
Arabia's harvest and the Paphian rose.
Her lofty front she diadems around
With sacred pines, like Ops on Ida crown'd;
Her dewy locks, with various flow'rs new-blown,
She interweaves, various, and all her own,
For Proserpine, in such a wreath attired,
Tænarian Dis himself with love inspired.
Fear not, lest, cold and coy, the nymph refuse!
Herself, with all her sighing Zephyrs, sues;
Each courts thee, fanning soft his scented wing,
And all her groves with warbled wishes ring.
Nor, unendow'd and indigent, aspires
The am'rous Earth to engage thy warm desires,
But, rich in balmy drugs, assists thy claim,
Divine Physician! to that glorious name.
If splendid recompense, if gifts can move
Desire in thee (gifts often purchase love),
She offers all the wealth her mountains hide,
And all that rests beneath the boundless tide.
How oft, when headlong from the heav'nly steep,
She sees thee playing in the western deep,
How oft she cries—"Ah, Phœbus! why repair
Thy wasted force, why seek refreshment there?
Can Tethys win thee? wherefore shouldst thou lave
A face so fair in her unpleasant wave;

Come, seek my green retreats, and rather choose
To cool thy tresses in my crystal dews,
The grassy turf shall yield the sweeter rest;
Come, lay thy evening glories on my breast,
And breathing fresh, through many a humid rose,
Soft whispering airs shall lull thee to repose!
No fears I feel like Semele to die,
Nor let thy burning wheels approach too nigh,
For thou canst govern them, here therefore rest,
And lay thy evening glories on my breast!"
  Thus breathes the wanton Earth her am'rous flame,
And all her countless offspring feel the same;
For Cupid now through every region strays,
Bright'ning his faded fires with solar rays,
His new-strung bow sends forth a deadlier sound,
And his new-pointed shafts more deeply wound;
Nor Dian's self escapes him now untried,
Nor even Vesta at her altar-side;
His mother too repairs her beauty's wane,
And seems sprung newly from the deep again.
Exulting youths the Hymeneal sing,
With Hymen's name, roofs, rocks, and valleys ring;
He, new-attired, and by the season drest,
Proceeds, all fragrant, in his saffron vest.
Now, many a golden-cinctured virgin roves
To taste the pleasures of the fields and groves,
All wish, and each alike, some fav'rite youth
Hers, in the bonds of Hymeneal truth.
Now pipes the shepherd through his reeds again,
Nor Phillis wants a song that suits the strain,
With songs the seaman hails the starry sphere,
And dolphins rise from the abyss to hear;
Jove feels himself the season, sports again
With his fair spouse, and banquets all his train.
Now too the Satyrs, in the dusk of eve,

Their mazy dance through flowery meadows weave,
And neither god nor goat, but both in kind,
Silvanus, wreathed with cypress, skips behind.
The Dryads leave their hollow sylvan cells
To roam the banks and solitary dells;
Pan riots now; and from his amorous chafe
Ceres and Cybele seem hardly safe,
And Faunus, all on fire to reach the prize,
In chase of some enticing Oread flies.
She bounds before, but fears too swift a bound,
And hidden lies, but wishes to be found.
Our shades entice th' immortals from above,
And some kind pow'r presides o'er every grove;
And long, ye pow'rs, o'er every grove preside,
For all is safe and blest, where ye abide!
Return, O Jove! the age of gold restore—
Why chose to dwell where storms and thunder roar?
At least, thou, Phœbus! moderate thy speed!
Let not the vernal hours too swift proceed,
Command rough Winter back, nor yield the pole
Too soon to night's encroaching long control?

ELEGY VII.

Composed in the Author's Nineteenth Year.

AS yet a stranger to the gentle fires,
That Amathusia's smiling queen inspires,
Not seldom I derided Cupid's darts,
And scorned his claim to rule all human hearts.
"Go, child," I said, "transfix the tim'rous dove!
An easy conquest suits an infant love;
Enslave the sparrow, for such prize shall be
Sufficient triumph to a chief like thee!

Why aim thy idle arms at human kind?
Thy shafts prevail not 'gainst the noble mind."

The Cyprian heard, and kindling into ire
(None kindles sooner), burn'd with double fire.

It was the spring, and newly risen day
Peep'd o'er the hamlets on the first of May;
My eyes, too tender for the blaze of light,
Still sought the shelter of retiring night,
When Love approach'd, in painted plumes array'd,
Th' insidious god his rattling darts betray'd,
Nor less his infant features, and the sly,
Sweet intimations of his threat'ning eye.

Such the Sigeian boy is seen above,
Filling the goblet for imperial Jove;
Such he, on whom the nymphs bestow'd their charms,
Hylas, who perish'd in a Naiad's arms.
Angry he seem'd, yet graceful in his ire,
And added threats, not destitute of fire.
"My power," he said, "by others' pain alone,
'Twere best to learn; now learn it by thy own!
With those who feel my power that pow'r attest!
And in thy anguish be my sway confest!
I vanquish'd Phœbus, though returning vain
From his new triumph o'er the Python slain,
And, when he thinks on Daphne, even he
Will yield the prize of archery to me.
A dart less true the Parthian horseman sped,
Behind him kill'd, and conquer'd as he fled;
Less true th' expert Cydonian, and less true
The youth whose shaft his latent Procris slew
Vanquish'd by me, see huge Orion bend,
By me Alcides, and Alcides' friend.

At me should Jove himself a bolt design,
His bosom first should bleed transfixt by mine.
But all thy doubts this shaft will best explain,
Nor shall it reach thee with a trivial pain,
Thy Muse, vain youth! shall not thy peace insure,
Nor Phœbus' serpent yield thy wound a cure."

He spoke, and, waving a bright shaft in air,
Sought the warm bosom of the Cyprian fair.

That thus a child should bluster in my ear,
Provok'd my laughter, more than moved my fear.
I shunn'd not, therefore, public haunts, but stray'd
Careless in city or suburban shade,
And passing, and repassing, nymphs, that mov'd
With grace divine, beheld where'er I rov'd.
Bright shone the vernal day with double blaze,
As beauty gave new force to Phœbus' rays.
By no grave scruples check'd, I freely eyed
The dang'rous show, rash youth my only guide,
And many a look of many a fair unknown
Met full, unable to control my own.
But one I mark'd (thence peace forsook my breast)
One—Oh, how far superior to the rest!
What lovely features! such the Cyprian queen
Herself might wish, and Juno wish her mien.
The very nymph was she, whom when I dar'd
His arrows, Love had even then prepar'd!
Nor was himself remote, nor unsupplied
With torch well-trimm'd and quiver at his side;
Now to her lips he clung, her eye-lids now,
Then settled on her cheeks, or on her brow;
And with a thousand wounds from ev'ry part
Pierced and transpierced my undefended heart.
A fever, new to me, of fierce desire

Now seized my soul, and I was all on fire ;
But she, the while, whom only I adore,
Was gone, and vanish'd, to appear no more.
In silent sadness I pursue my way ;
I pause, I turn, proceed, yet wish to stay,
And while I follow her in thought, bemoan,
With tears, my soul's delight so quickly flown.
When Jove had hurl'd him to the Lemnian coast,
So Vulcan sorrow'd for Olympus lost,
And so Oeclides, sinking into night,
From the deep gulph look'd up to distant light.

Wretch that I am, what hopes for me remain,
Who cannot cease to love, yet love in vain ?
Oh could I once—once more behold the fair,
Speak to her, tell her of the pangs I bear.
Perhaps she is not adamant, would show
Perhaps some pity at my tale of woe.
Oh, inauspicious flame—'tis mine to prove
A matchless instance of disastrous love.
Ah, spare me, gentle pow'r !—If such thou be,
Let not thy deeds and nature disagree.
Spare me, and I will worship at no shrine
With vow and sacrifice, save only thine.
Now I revere thy fires, thy bow, thy darts ;
Now own thee sov'reign of all human hearts.
Remove ! no—grant me still this raging woe !
Sweet is the wretchedness that lovers know :
But pierce hereafter (should I chance to see
One destin'd mine) at once both her and me.

Such were the trophies that, in earlier days,
By vanity seduced, I toil'd to raise,
Studious, yet indolent, and urged by youth,
That worst of teachers ! from the ways of truth,

Till learning taught me, in his shady bow'r,
To quit love's servile yoke, and spurn his pow'r.
Then, on a sudden, the fierce flame suppress,
A frost continual settled on my breast,
Whence Cupid fears his flames extinct to see,
And Venus dreads a Diomede in me.

Epigrams.

ON THE INVENTOR OF GUNS.

PRAISE in old times the sage Prometheus won,
Who stole ethereal radiance from the sun;
But greater he whose bold invention strove
To emulate the fiery bolts of Jove.

TO LEONORA SINGING AT ROME.

ANOTHER Leonora once inspired
Tasso, with fatal love to frenzy fired;
But how much happier, lived he now, were he,
Pierced with whatever pangs for love of thee!
Since could he hear that heav'nly voice of thine,
With Adrian's lute of sound divine,
Fiercer than Pentheus' though his eye might roll,
Or idiot apathy benumb his soul,
Yet still, with medicinal sounds might cheer
His senses wand'ring in a blind career;
And sweetly breathing through his wounded breast,
Charm, with soul-soothing song, his thoughts to rest.

THE COTTAGER AND HIS LANDLORD.

A FABLE.

A PEASANT to his lord paid yearly court,
Presenting pippins, of so rich a sort
That he, displeased to have a part alone,
Removed the tree, that all might be his own.
The tree, too old to travel, though before
So fruitful, wither'd, and would yield no more.
The squire, perceiving all his labour void,
Curs'd his own pains, so foolishly employ'd.
And "Oh," he cried, "that I had lived content
With tribute, small indeed, but kindly meant!
My av'rice has expensive proved to me,
Has cost me both my pippins and my tree."

NATURE UNIMPAIRED BY TIME.

AH, how the human mind wearies herself
With her own wand'rings, and, involv'd in gloom
Impenetrable, speculates amiss!
Measuring, in her folly, things divine
By human; laws inscrib'd on adamant
By laws of man's device, and counsels fixt
For ever, by the hours that pass and die.
How?—shall the face of Nature then be plough'd
Into deep wrinkles, and shall years at last
On the great parent fix a sterile curse?
Shall even she confess old age, and halt,
And, palsy-smitten, shake her starry brows!
Shall foul Antiquity, with rust and drought,

And famine, vex the radiant worlds above?
Shall Time's unsated maw crave and engulf
The very heav'ns that regulate his flight?
And was the Sire of all able to fence
His works, and to uphold the circling worlds,
But, through improvident and heedless haste,
Let slip th' occasion?—so then—all is lost—
And in some future evil hour, yon arch
Shall crumble, and come thund'ring down, the poles
Jar in collision, the Olympian king
Fall with his throne, and Pallas, holding forth
The terrors of the Gorgon shield in vain,
Shall rush to the abyss, like Vulcan hurl'd
Down into Lemnos, through the gate of heav'n.
Thou also, with precipitated wheels,
Phœbus! thy own son's fall shalt imitate,
With hideous ruin shalt impress the deep
Suddenly, and the flood shall reek and hiss,
At the extinction of the lamp of day.
Then too shall Hæmus, cloven to his base,
Be shatter'd, and the huge Ceraunian hills,
Once weapons of Tartarean Dis, immers'd
In Erebus, shall fill himself with fear.
No. The Almighty Father surer laid
His deep foundations, and providing well
For the event of all, the scales of Fate
Suspended, in just equipoise, and bade
His universal works, from age to age,
One tenor hold, perpetual, undisturb'd.
Hence the prime mover wheels itself about
Continual, day by day, and with it bears
In social measure swift the heav'ns around.
Not tardier now is Saturn than of old,
Nor radiant less the burning casque of Mars.
Phœbus, his vigour unimpair'd, still shows

Th' effulgence of his youth, nor needs the god
A downward course, that he may warm the vales :
But, ever rich in influence, runs his road,
Sign after sign, through all the heav'nly zone.
Beautiful, as at first, ascends the star
From ordorif'rous Ind, whose office is
To gather home betimes th' ethereal flock,
To pour them o'er the skies again at eve,
And to discriminate the night and day.
Still Cynthia's changeful horn waxes and wanes
Alternate, and with arms extended still
She welcomes to her breast her brother's beams.
Nor have the elements deserted yet
Their functions ; thunder, with as loud a stroke
As erst, smites thro' the rocks, and scatters them.
The east still howls, still the relentless north
Invades the shudd'ring Scythian, still he breathes
The winter, and still rolls the storms along.
The king of ocean, with his wonted force,
Beats on Pelorus, o'er the deep is heard
The hoarse alarm of Triton's sounding shell,
Nor swim the monsters of the Ægean sea
In shallows, or beneath diminish'd waves.
Thou too, thy ancient vegetative pow'r
Enjoy'st, O earth ! Narcissus still is sweet,
And Phœbus still thy favourite, and still
Thy fav'rite, Cytherea ! both retain
Their beauty, nor the mountains, ore-enrich'd
For punishment of man, with purer gold
Teem'd ever, or with brighter gems the deep.
  Thus, in unbroken series, all proceeds ;
And shall, till wide involving either pole,
And the immensity of yonder heav'n,
The final flames of destiny absorb
The world, consum'd in one enormous pyre !

TO HIS FATHER.

OH that Pieria's spring would through my breast
Pour its inspiring influence, and rush
No rill, but rather an o'erflowing flood!
That, for my venerable Father's sake
All meaner themes renounced, my Muse, on wings
Of duty borne, might reach a loftier strain.
For thee, my Father! howsoe'er it please,
She frames this slender work, nor know I aught
That may thy gifts more suitably requite;
Though to requite them suitably would ask
Returns much nobler, and surpassing far
The meagre stores of verbal gratitude:
But, such as I possess, I send thee all.
This page presents thee in their full amount
With thy son's treasures, and the sum is nought;
Nought, save the riches that from airy dream
In secret grottos, and in laurel bow'rs,
I have, by golden Clio's gift, acquired.

Verse is a work divine; despise not thou
Verse therefore, which evinces (nothing more)
Man's heavenly source, and which, retaining still
Some scintillations of Promethean fire,
Bespeaks him animated from above.
The gods love verse; the infernal Pow'rs themselves
Confess the influence of verse, which stirs
The lowest deep, and binds in triple chains
Of adamant both Pluto and the Shades.
In verse the Delphic priestess, and the pale,
Tremulous Sybil, make the future known,
And he who sacrifices, on the shrine [bull,
Hangs verse, both when he smites the threat'ning

And when he spreads his reeking entrails wide
To scrutinise the Fates enveloped there.
We, too, ourselves, what time we seek again
Our native skies, and one eternal now
Shall be the only measure of our being,
Crown'd all with gold, and chanting to the lyre
Harmonious verse, shall range the courts above,
And make the starry firmament resound.
And, even now, the fiery spirit pure
That wheels yon circling orbs directs, himself,
Their mazy dance with melody of verse
Unutt'rable, immortal, hearing which,
Huge Ophiuchus holds his hiss suppress'd,
Orion soften'd, drops his ardent blade,
And Atlas stands unconscious of his load.
Verse graced of old the feasts of kings, ere yet
Luxurious dainties, destined to the gulf
Immense of gluttony, were known, and ere
Lyæus deluged yet the temp'rate board.
Then sat the bard a customary guest
To share the banquet, and, his length of locks
With beechen honours bound, proposed in verse
The characters of heroes and their deeds
To imitation, sang of Chaos old,
Of Nature's birth, of gods that crept in search
Of acorns fall'n, and of the thunder-bolt
Not yet produced from Etna's fiery cave.
And what avails, at last, tune without voice,
Devoid of matter? Such may suit perhaps
The rural dance, but such was ne'er the song
Of Orpheus, whom the streams stood still to hear,
And the oaks follow'd. Not by chords alone
Well touch'd, but by resistless accents more
To sympathetic tears the ghosts themselves
He moved: these praises to his verse he owes.

Nor thus persist, I pray thee, still to slight
The sacred Nine, and to imagine vain
And useless, Pow'rs, by whom inspired, thyself
Art skilful to associate verse with airs
Harmonious, and to give the human voice
A thousand modulations, heir by right
Indisputable of Arion's fame.
Now say, what wonder is it, if a son
Of thine delight in verse, if so conjoin'd
In close affinity, we sympathise
In social arts, and kindred studies sweet?
Such distribution of himself to us
Was Phœbus' choice; thou hast thy gift, and I
Mine also, and between us we receive,
Father and son, the whole inspiring God.

No! howsoe'er the semblance thou assume
Of hate, thou hatest not the gentle Muse,
My father! for thou never bad'st me tread
The beaten path, and broad, that leads right on
To opulence, nor didst condemn thy son
To the insipid clamours of the bar,
To laws voluminous, and ill observed;
But, wishing to enrich me more, to fill
My mind with treasure, led'st me far away
From city din to deep retreats, to banks
And streams Aonian, and, with free consent,
Didst place me happy at Apollo's side.
I speak not now, on more important themes
Intent, of common benefits, and such
As Nature bids, but of thy larger gifts,
My Father! who when I had open'd once
The stores of Roman rhetoric, and learn'd
The full-toned language of the eloquent Greeks,
Whose lofty music graced the lips of Jove,

Thyself didst counsel me to add the flow'rs
That Gallia boasts ; those too with which the smooth
Italian his degen'rate speech adorns,
That witnesses his mixture with the Goth ;
And Palestine's prophetic songs divine.
To sum the whole, whate'er the heav'n contains,
The earth beneath it, and the air between,
The rivers and the restless deep, may all
Prove intellectual gain to me, my wish
Concurring with thy will ; science herself,
All cloud removed, inclines her beauteous head,
And offers me the lip, if, dull of heart,
I shrink not, and decline her gracious boon.

Go now, and gather dross, ye sordid minds,
That covet it ; what could my Father more ?
What more could Jove himself, unless he gave
His own abode, the heaven in which he reigns ?
More eligible gifts than these were not
Apollo's to his son, had they been safe,
As they were insecure, who made the boy
The world's vice-luminary, bade him rule
The radiant chariot of the day, and bind
To his young brows his own all dazzling wreath.
I therefore, although last and least, my place
Will hold, and where the conqu'ror's ivy twines,
Henceforth exempt from the unletter'd throng
Profane, nor even to be seen as such.
Away then, sleepless Care, Complaint, away,
And Envy, with thy "jealous leer malign !"
Nor let the monster Calumny shoot forth
Her venom'd tongue at me. Detested foes !
Ye all are impotent against my peace,
For I am privileg'd, and bear my breast
Safe, and too high, from your viperean wound.

But thou, my Father! since to render thanks
Equivalent, and to requite by deeds
Thy liberality, exceeds my power,
Suffice it, that I thus record thy gifts,
And bear them treasured in a grateful mind!
Ye too, the favourite pastime of my youth,
My voluntary numbers, if ye dare
To hope longevity, and to survive
Your master's funeral, not soon absorb'd
In the oblivious Lethean gulf,
Shall to futurity perhaps convey
This theme, and by these praises of my sire
Improve the Fathers of a distant age!

ON THE DEATH OF DAMON.

THE ARGUMENT.

Thyrsis and Damon, shepherds and neighbours, had always pursued the same studies, and had, from their earliest days, been united in the closest friendship. Thyrsis, while travelling for improvement, received intelligence of the death of Damon, and, after a time, returning and finding it true, deplores himself, and his solitary condition, in this poem.

By Damon is to be understood Charles Deodati, connected with the Italian city of Lucca by his father's side, in other respects an Englishman—a youth of uncommon genius, erudition, and virtue.

YE nymphs of Himera (for ye have shed
Erewhile for Daphnis, and for Hylas dead,
And over Bion's long lamented bier,
The fruitless meed of many a sacred tear),

Now through the villas laved by Thames rehearse
The woes of Thyrsis in Sicilian verse,
What sighs he heaved, and how, with groans profound,
He made the woods and hollow rocks resound
Young Damon dead ; nor even ceased to pour
His lonely sorrows at the midnight hour.
The green wheat twice had nodded in the ear,
And golden harvest twice enrich'd the year,
Since Damon's lips had gasp'd for vital air
The last, last time, nor Thyrsis yet was there ;
For he, enamour'd of the Muse, remain'd
In Tuscan Fiorenza long detain'd,
But, stored at length with all he wished to learn,
For his flock's sake now hasted to return ;
And when the shepherd had resumed his seat
At the elm's root, within his old retreat,
Then 'twas his lot, then, all his loss to know,
And, from his burthen'd heart, he vented thus his woe :
"Go, seek your home, my lambs ; my thoughts are due
To other cares than those of feeding you.
Alas ! what deities shall I suppose
In heav'n or earth, concern'd for human woes,
Since, oh my Damon ! their severe decree
So soon condemns me to regret of thee !
Depart'st thou thus, thy virtues unrepaid
With fame and honour, like a vulgar shade !
Let him forbid it, whose bright rod controls,
And sep'rates sordid from illustrious souls,
Drive far the rabble, and to thee assign
A happier lot, with spirits worthy thine.
"Go, seek your home, my lambs ; my thoughts are due
To other cares than those of feeding you.

Whate'er befall, unless by cruel chance
The wolf first give me a forbidding glance,
Thou shalt not moulder undeplored, but long
Thy praise shall dwell on ev'ry shepherd's tongue;
To Daphnis first they shall delight to pay,
And, after him, to thee the votive lay,
While Pales shall the flocks and pastures love,
Or Faunus to frequent the field or grove,
At least, if ancient piety and truth,
With all the learnèd labours of thy youth,
May serve thee aught, or to have left behind
A sorrowing friend, and of the tuneful kind. [due
"Go, seek your home, my lambs; my thoughts are
To other cares than those of feeding you.
Yes, Damon! such thy sure reward shall be;
But ah, what doom awaits unhappy me?
Who, now, my pains and perils shall divide,
As thou wast wont, for ever at my side,
Both when the rugged frost annoy'd our feet,
And when the herbage all was parch'd with heat;
Whether the grim wolf's ravage to prevent,
Or the huge lion's, arm'd with darts, he went?
Whose converse, now, shall calm my stormy day,
With charming song, who now beguile my way?
"Go, seek your home, my lambs; my thoughts are due
To other cares than those of feeding you.
In whom shall I confide? whose counsel find
A balmy med'cine for my troubled mind?
Or whose discourse, with innocent delight,
Shall fill me now, and cheat the wintry night,
While hisses on my hearth the pulpy pear,
And black'ning chestnuts start and crackle there,
While storms abroad the dreary meadows whelm,
And the wind thunders through the neighb'ring elm?

"Go, seek your home, my lambs; my thoughts are due
To other cares than those of feeding you.
Or who, when summer suns their summit reach,
And Pan sleeps hidden by the shelt'ring beech,
When shepherds disappear, nymphs seek the sedge,
And the stretch'd rustic snores beneath the hedge,
Who then shall render me thy pleasant vein
Of Attic wit, thy jests, thy smiles again?
"Go, seek your home, my lambs; my thoughts are due
To other cares than those of feeding you.
Where glens and vales are thickest overgrown
With tangled boughs, I wander now alone,
Till night descend, while blust'ring wind and show'r
Beat on my temples through the shatter'd bow'r.
"Go, seek your home, my lambs; my thoughts are due
To other cares than those of feeding you.
Alas! what rampant weeds now shame my fields,
And what a mildew'd crop the furrow yields!
My rambling vines, unwedded to the trees,
Bear shrivell'd grapes, my myrtles fail to please,
Nor please me more my flocks; they, slighted, turn
Their unavailing looks on me, and mourn. [due
"Go, seek your home, my lambs; my thoughts are
To other cares than those of feeding you.
Ægon invites me to the hazel grove,
Amyntas, on the river's bank to rove,
And young Alphesibœus to a seat
Where branching elms exclude the mid-day heat.
'Here fountains spring—here mossy hillocks rise;
Here Zephyr whispers, and the stream replies.'
Thus each persuades, but, deaf to ev'ry call,
I gain the thickets, and escape them all.

"Go, seek your home, my lambs; my thoughts are
due
To other cares than those of feeding you.
Then Mopsus said (the same who reads so well
The voice of birds, and what the stars foretell,
For he by chance had noticed my return),
'What means thy sullen mood, this deep concern?
Ah Thyrsis! thou art either crazed with love,
Or some sinister influence from above;
Dull Saturn's influence oft the shepherds rue:
His leaden shaft oblique has pierced thee through.'
"Go, go, my lambs, unpastured as ye are,
My thoughts are all now due to other care.
The nymphs amazed, my melancholy see,
And 'Thyrsis!' cry—'what will become of thee!
What wouldst thou, Thyrsis? such should not appear
The brow of youth, stern, gloomy, and severe;
Brisk youth should laugh, and love—ah shun the fate
Of those, twice wretched mopes! who love too late!'
"Go, go, my lambs, unpastured as ye are,
My thoughts are all now due to other care.
Ægle with Hyas came, to soothe my pain,
And Baucis' daughter, Dryope, the vain,
Fair Dryope, for voice and finger neat
Known far and near, and for her self-conceit;
Chloris too came, whose cottage on the lands
That skirt the Idumanian current stands;
But all in vain they came, and but to see
Kind words, and comfortable, lost on me.
"Go, go, my lambs, unpastured as ye are;
My thoughts are all now due to other care.
Ah blest indiff'rence of the playful herd,
None by his fellow chosen, or preferr'd!
No bonds of amity the flocks enthrall,
But each associates and is pleased with all;

So graze the dappled deer in num'rous droves,
And all his kind alike the zebra loves ;
The same law governs, where the billows roar,
And Proteus' shoals o'erspread the desert shore ;
The sparrow, meanest of the feather'd race,
His fit companion finds in ev'ry place,
With whom he picks the grain that suits him best,
Flirts here and there, and late returns to rest,
And whom if chance the falcon makes his prey,
Or hedger with his well-aim'd arrow slay,
For no such loss the gay survivor grieves ;
New love he seeks, and new delight receives.
We only, an obdurate kind, rejoice,
Scorning all others in a single choice.
We scarce in thousands meet one kindred mind,
And if the long-sought good at last we find,
When least we fear it, Death our treasure steals,
And gives our heart a wound that nothing heals.
"Go, go, my lambs, unpastured as ye are ;
My thoughts are all now due to other care.
Ah, what delusion lured me from my flocks,
To traverse Alpine snows and rugged rocks !
What need so great had I to visit Rome,
Now sunk in ruins, and herself a tomb ?
Or, had she flourish'd still as when, of old,
For her sake Tityrus forsook his fold,
What need so great had I t' incur a pause
Of thy sweet intercourse for such a cause,
For such a cause to place the roaring sea,
Rocks, mountains, woods, between my friend and me ?
Else, had I grasp'd thy feeble hand, composed
Thy decent limbs, thy drooping eyelids closed,
And, at the last, had said—'Farewell—ascend—
Nor even in the skies forget thy friend !'

"Go, go, my lambs, untended homeward fare;
My thoughts are all now due to other care.
Although well-pleased, ye tuneful Tuscan swains!
My mind the mem'ry of your worth retains,
Yet not your worth can teach me less to mourn
My Damon lost.—He too was Tuscan born,
Born in your Lucca, city of renown!
And wit possess'd, and genius, like your own.
O, how elate was I, when stretch'd beside
The murm'ring course of Arno's breezy tide,
Beneath the poplar grove I pass'd my hours,
Now cropping myrtles, and now vernal flow'rs,
And hearing, as I lay at ease along,
Your swains contending for the prize of song!
I also dared attempt (and, as it seems,
Not much displeas'd attempting) various themes,
For even I can presents boast from you,
The shepherd's pipe, and ozier basket too,
And Dati and Francini, both have made
My name familiar to the beechen shade,
And they are learn'd, and each in ev'ry place
Renown'd for song, and both of Lydian race.
"Go, go, my lambs, untended homeward fare;
My thoughts are all now due to other care.
While bright the dewy grass with moonbeams shone,
And I stood hurdling in my kids alone,
How often have I said (but thou hadst found
Ere then thy dark cold lodgment under ground)
Now Damon sings, or springes sets for hares,
Or wicker-work for various use prepares!
How oft, indulging fancy, have I plann'd
New scenes of pleasure, that I hoped at hand,
Call'd thee abroad as I was wont, and cried—
'What hoa! my friend—come, lay thy task aside,
Haste, let us forth together, and beguile

The heat beneath yon whisp'ring shades awhile,
Or on the margin stray of Colne's clear flood,
Or where Cassibelan's grey turrets stood!
There thou shalt cull me simples, and shalt teach
Thy friend the name and healing pow'rs of each,
From the tall blue-bell to the dwarfish weed,
What the dry land and what the marshes breed,
For all their kinds alike to thee are known,
And the whole art of Galen is thy own.'
Ah, perish Galen's art, and wither'd be
The useless herbs that gave not health to thee!
Twelve evenings since, as in poetic dream
I meditating sat some statelier theme,
The reeds no sooner touch'd my lip, though new,
And unessay'd before, than wide they flew,
Bursting their waxen bands, nor could sustain
The deep-toned music of the solemn strain;
And I am vain perhaps, but I will tell
How proud a theme I choose—ye groves, farewell!
"Go, go, my lambs, untended homeward fare;
My thoughts are all now due to other care.
Of Brutus, Dardan chief, my song shall be,
How with his barks he plough'd the British sea,
First from Rutupia's tow'ring headland seen,
And of his consort's reign, fair Imogen;
Of Brennus and Belinus, brothers bold,
And of Arviragus, and how of old
Our hardy sires th' Armorican controll'd,
And of the wife of Gorloïs, who, surpris'd
By Uther, in her husband's form disguis'd
(Such was the force of Merlin's art), became
Pregnant with Arthur of heroic fame.
These themes I now revolve—and oh—if Fate
Proportion to these themes my lengthen'd date,
Adieu my shepherd's reed—yon pine-tree bough

Shall be thy future home, there dangle thou
Forgotten and disus'd, unless ere long
Thou change thy Latian for a British song ;
A British ?—even so—the pow'rs of man
Are bounded ; little is the most he can ;
And it shall well suffice me, and shall be
Fame, and proud recompense enough for me,
If Usa, golden-hair'd, my verse may learn,
If Alain, bending o'er his crystal urn,
Swift-whirling Abra, Trent's o'ershadow'd stream,
Thames, lovelier far than all in my esteem,
Tamar's ore-tinctur'd flood, and, after these,
The wave-worn shores of utmost Orcades.
"Go, go, my lambs, untended homeward fare ;
My thoughts are all now due to other care.
All this I kept in leaves of laurel-rind
Enfolded safe, and for thy view design'd,
This—and a gift from Manso's hand beside
(Manso not least his native city's pride),
Two cups, that radiant as their giver shone,
Adorn'd by sculpture with a double zone.
The spring was graven there ; here slowly wind
The Red Sea shores with groves of spices lin'd :
Her plumes of various hues amid the boughs
The sacred, solitary Phœnix shows,
And, watchful of the dawn, reverts her head,
To see Aurora leave her wat'ry bed.
—In other part, th' expansive vault above,
And there too, even there, the god of love ;
With quiver arm'd he mounts, his torch displays
A vivid light, his gem-tipt arrows blaze,
Around his bright and fiery eyes he rolls,
Nor aims at vulgar minds or little souls,
Nor deigns one look below, but aiming high,
Sends every arrow to the lofty sky ;

Hence forms divine, and minds immortal, learn
The pow'r of Cupid, and enamour'd burn.
"Thou also, Damon (neither need I fear
That hope delusive), thou art also there;
For whither should simplicity like thine
Retire? where else such spotless virtue shine?
Thou dwell'st not (thought profane) in shades below,
Nor tears suit thee—cease then my tears to flow;
Away with grief! on Damon ill bestow'd!
Who, pure himself, has found a pure abode,
Has pass'd the show'ry arch, henceforth resides
With saints and heroes, and from flowing tides
Quaffs copious immortality, and joy,
With hallow'd lips!—O! blest without alloy,
And now enrich'd with all that faith can claim,
Look down, entreated by whatever name.
If Damon please thee most (that rural sound
Shall oft with echoes fill the groves around),
Or of Diodatus, by which alone
In those ethereal mansions thou art known.
Thy blush was maiden, and thy youth the taste
Of wedded bliss knew never, pure and chaste,
The honours, therefore, by divine decree,
The lot of virgin worth, are given to thee;
Thy brows encircled with a radiant band,
And the green palm-branch waving in thy hand,
Thou in immortal nuptials shalt rejoice,
And join with seraphs thy according voice,
Where rapture reigns, and the ecstatic lyre
Guides the blest orgies of the blazing quire."

Translations from Vincent Bourne.

RECIPROCAL KINDNESS

THE PRIMARY LAW OF NATURE.

ANDROCLES from his injured lord, in dread
Of instant death, to Libya's desert fled.
Tired with his toilsome flight, and parch'd with heat,
He spied at length a cavern's cool retreat;
But scarce had given to rest his weary frame,
When, hugest of his kind, a lion came:
He roar'd approaching: but the savage din
To plaintive murmurs changed,—arrived within,
And with expressive looks, his lifted paw
Presenting, aid implored from whom he saw.
The fugitive, through terror at a stand,
Dared not awhile afford his trembling hand,
But bolder grown, at length inherent found
A pointed thorn, and drew it from the wound.
The cure was wrought; he wiped the sanious blood,
And firm and free from pain the lion stood.
Again he seeks the wilds, and day by day,
Regales his inmate with the parted prey;
Nor he disdains the dole, though unprepared,
Spread on the ground, and with a lion shared.
But thus to live—still lost—sequester'd still—
Scarce seem'd his lord's revenge a heavier ill.
Home! native home! O might he but repair!
He must—he will, though death attends him there.
He goes, and doom'd to perish, on the sands
Of the full theatre unpitied stands;
When lo! the self-same lion from his cage

Flies to devour him, famish'd into rage.
He flies, but viewing in his purposed prey
The man, his healer, pauses on his way,
And soften'd by remembrance into sweet
And kind composure, crouches at his feet.

Mute with astonishment th' assembly gaze:
But why, ye Romans? Whence your mute amaze?
All this is nat'ral: Nature bade him rend
An enemy; she bids him spare a friend.

A MANUAL

MORE ANCIENT THAN THE ART OF PRINTING, AND NOT TO BE FOUND IN ANY CATALOGUE.

THERE is a book, which we may call
(Its excellence is such)
Alone a library, though small;
The ladies thumb it much.

Words none, things num'rous it contains:
And, things with words compared,
Who needs be told, that has his brains,
Which merit most regard?

Ofttimes its leaves of scarlet hue
A golden edging boast;
And open'd, it displays to view
Twelve pages at the most.

No name, nor title, stamp'd behind,
Adorns its outer part;

But all within 'tis richly lined,
A magazine of art.

The whitest hands that secret hoard
Oft visit: and the fair
Preserve it in their bosoms stored,
As with a miser's care.

Thence implement of ev'ry size,
And form'd the various use,
(They need but to consult their eyes)
They rapidly produce.

The largest and the longest kind
Possess the foremost page,
A sort most needed by the blind,
Or nearly such from age.

The full-charged leaf, which next ensues,
Presents in bright array
The smaller sort, which matrons use,
Not quite so blind as they.

The third, the fourth, the fifth supply
What their occasions ask,
Who with a more discerning eye
Perform a nicer task.

But still with regular decrease
From size to size they fall,
In ev'ry leaf grow less and less;
The last are least of all.

Oh! what a fund of genius, pent
In narrow space, is here!
This volume's method and intent
How luminous and clear!

It leaves no reader at a loss
Or posed, whoever reads:
No commentator's tedious gloss,
Nor even index needs.

Search Bodley's many thousands o'er!
No book is treasured there,
Nor yet in Granta's num'rous store,
That may with this compare.

No!—Rival none in either host
Of this was ever seen,
Or that contents could justly boast,
So brilliant and so keen.

FAMILIARITY DANGEROUS.

AS in her ancient mistress' lap
The youthful tabby lay,
They gave each other many a tap,
Alike disposed to play.

But strife ensues. Puss waxes warm,
And with protruded claws
Ploughs all the length of Lydia's arm,
Mere wantonness the cause.

At once, resentful of the deed,
She shakes her to the ground
With many a threat, that she shall bleed
With still a deeper wound.

But, Lydia, bid thy fury rest;
It was a venial stroke:
For she that will with kittens jest
Should bear a kitten's joke.

STRADA'S NIGHTINGALE.

THE shepherd touch'd his reed; sweet Philomel
Essay'd, and oft essay'd to catch the strain,
And treasuring, as on her ear they fell,
The numbers, echo'd note for note again.

The peevish youth, who ne'er had found before
A rival of his skill, indignant heard,
And soon (for various was his tuneful store)
In loftier tones defied the simple bird.

She dared the task, and rising, as he rose,
With all the force that passion gives inspired,
Return'd the sounds awhile, but in the close
Exhausted fell, and at his feet expired.

Thus strength, not skill, prevail'd. O fatal strife,
By thee, poor songstress, playfully begun;
And O sad victory, which cost thy life,
And he may wish that he had never won!

THE CAUSE WON.

TWO neighbours furiously dispute;
A field—the subject of the suit.
Trivial the spot, yet such the rage
With which the combatants engage,

'Twere hard to tell, who covets most
The prize—at whatsoever cost.
The pleadings swell. Words still suffice,
No single word but has its price :
No term but yields some fair pretence
For novel and increas'd expense.

Defendant thus becomes a name,
Which he that bore it may disclaim ;
Since both, in one description blended,
Are plaintiffs—when the suit is ended.

THE INNOCENT THIEF.

NOT a flow'r can be found in the fields,
Or the spot that we till for our pleasure,
From the largest to least, but it yields
The bee, never wearied, a treasure.

Scarce any she quits unexplor'd,
With a diligence truly exact ;
Yet, steal what she may for her hoard,
Leaves evidence none of the fact.

Her lucrative task she pursues,
And pilfers with so much address,
That none of their odour they lose,
Nor charm by their beauty the less.

Not thus inoffensively preys
The canker-worm, indwelling foe !
His voracity not thus allays
The sparrow, the finch, or the crow.

The worm, more expensively fed,
The pride of the garden devours;
And birds peck the seed from the bed,
Still less to be spar'd than the flow'rs.

But she, with such delicate skill,
Her pillage so fits for her use,
That the chemist in vain with his still
Would labour the like to produce.

Then grudge not her temperate meals,
Nor a benefit blame as a theft;
Since, stole she not all that she steals,
Neither honey nor wax would be left.

THE TEARS OF A PAINTER.

APELLES, hearing that his boy
Had just expir'd—his only joy!
Although the sight with anguish tore him
Bade place his dear remains before him.
He seized his brush, his colours spread;
And—"Oh! my child, accept,"—he said
"('Tis all that I can now bestow),
This tribute of a father's woe!"
Then faithful to the two-fold part,
Both of his feelings and his art,
He clos'd his eyes, with tender care,
And form'd at once a fellow pair.
His brow with amber locks beset,
And lips he drew, not livid yet;
And shaded all that he had done
To a just image of his son.

Thus far is well. But view again
The cause of thy paternal pain !
Thy melancholy task fulfil !
It needs the last, last touches still.
Again his pencil's powers he tries,
For on his lips a smile he spies :
And still his cheek unfaded shows
The deepest damask of the rose.
Then, heedful to the finish'd whole,
With fondest eagerness he stole,
Till scarce himself distinctly knew
The cherub copied from the true.

Now, painter, cease ! Thy task is done.
Long lives this image of thy son ;
Nor short-liv'd shall thy glory prove,
Or of thy labour, or thy love.

THE SNAIL.

TO grass, or leaf, or fruit, or wall,
The snail sticks close, nor fears to fall,
As if he grew there, house and all
Together.

Within that house secure he hides,
When danger imminent betides
Of storm, or other harm besides
Of weather.

Give but his horns the slightest touch,
His self-collecting power is such,
He shrinks into his house with much
Displeasure.

Where'er he dwells, he dwells alone,
Except himself has chattels none,
Well satisfied to be his own
Whole treasure.

Thus, hermit-like, his life he leads,
Nor partner of his banquet needs,
And if he meets one, only feeds
The faster.

Who seeks him must be worse than blind
(He and his house are so combined),
If, finding it, he fails to find
Its master.

Translations of Greek Verses.

FROM THE GREEK OF JULIANUS.

A SPARTAN, his companions slain,
Alone from battle fled,
His mother, kindling with disdain
That she had borne him, struck him dead;

For courage, and not birth alone,
In Sparta testifies a son!

ON THE REED.

I WAS of late a barren plant,
Useless, insignificant,
Nor fig, nor grape, nor apple bore,
A native of the marshy shore;

But gather'd for poetic use,
And plung'd into a sable juice,
Of which my modicum I sip,
With narrow mouth and slender lip,
At once, although by nature dumb,
All eloquent I have become,
And speak with fluency untired,
As if by Phœbus' self inspired.

AN EPITAPH.

MY name—my country—what are they to thee?
What, whether base or proud, my pedigree?
Perhaps I far surpass'd all other men—
Perhaps I fell below them all—what then?
Suffice it, Stranger! that thou seest a tomb—
Thou know'st its use—it hides no matter whom.

ANOTHER.

TAKE to thy bosom, gentle earth, a swain
With much hard labour in thy service worn!
He set the vines that clothe yon ample plain,
And he these olives that the vale adorn.

He fill'd with grain the glebe; the rills he led
Through this green herbage, and those fruitful bow'rs;
Thou, therefore, earth! lie lightly on his head,
His hoary head, and deck his grave with flow'rs.

ANOTHER.

AT threescore winters' end I died,
A cheerless being, sole and sad;
The nuptial knot I never tied,
And wish my father never had.

TO HEALTH.

ELDEST born of pow'rs divine,
Blest Hygeia! be it mine
To enjoy what thou canst give,
And henceforth with thee to live:
For in pow'r if pleasure be,
Wealth, or num'rous progeny,
Or in amorous embrace,
Where no spy infests the place:
Or in aught that Heav'n bestows,
To alleviate human woes,
When the wearied heart despairs
Of a respite from its cares;
These and ev'ry true delight
Flourish only in thy sight;
And the sister Graces Three
Owe, themselves, their youth to thee,
Without whom we may possess
Much, but never happiness.

ON FLATTERERS.

NO mischief worthier of our fear
In Nature can be found,
Than friendship, in ostent sincere,
But hollow and unsound.
For lull'd into a dangerous dream
We close enfold a foe,
Who strikes, when most secure we seem,
Th' inevitable blow.

ON LATE ACQUIRED WEALTH.

POOR in my youth, and in life's later scenes
Rich to no end, I curse my natal hour:
Who nought enjoy'd while young, denied the means;
And nought, when old, enjoy'd, denied the pow'r.

ON A GOOD MAN.

TRAV'LLER, regret not me; for thou shalt find
Just cause of sorrow none in my decease,
Who, dying, children's children left behind,
And with one wife liv'd many a year in peace:
Three virtuous youths espous'd my daughters three,
And oft their infants in my bosom lay,
Nor saw I one, of all deriv'd from me,
Touch'd with disease, or torn by death away.
Their duteous hands my fun'ral rites bestow'd,
And me, by blameless manners fitted well
To seek it, sent to the serene abode,
Where shades of pious men for ever dwell.

ON A TRUE FRIEND.

HAST thou a friend? Thou hast indeed
A rich and large supply,
Treasure to serve your every need,
Well manag'd, till you die.

ON PEDIGREE.

FROM EPICHARMUS.

MY mother! if thou love me, name no more
My noble birth! Sounding at every breath
My noble birth, thou kill'st me. Thither fly,
As to their only refuge, all from whom
Nature withholds all good besides; they boast
Their noble birth, conduct us to the tombs
Of their forefathers, and from age to age
Ascending, trumpet their illustrious race:
But whom hast thou beheld, or canst thou name,
Derived from no forefather? Such a man
Lives not; for how could such be born at all?
And if it chance, that native of a land
Far distant, or in infancy deprived
Of all his kindred, one, who *cannot* trace
His origin, exist, why deem him sprung
From baser ancestry than theirs, who *can?*
My mother! he, whom Nature at his birth
Endow'd with virtuous qualities, although
An Æthiop and a slave, is nobly born.

ON A MISER.

THEY call thee rich—I deem thee poor,
Since, if thou dar'st not use thy store,
But sav'st it only for thine heirs,
The treasure is not thine, but theirs.

ON FEMALE INCONSTANCY.

RICH, thou hadst many lovers—poor, hast none,
So surely want extinguishes the flame,
And she, who call'd thee once her pretty one,
And her Adonis, now inquires thy name.

Where wast thou born, Sosicrates, and where,
In what strange country can thy parents live,
Who seem'st, by thy complaints, not yet aware
That want's a crime no woman can forgive?

ON A CHARACTER.

YOU give your cheeks a rosy stain,
With washes dye your hair,
But paint and washes both are vain
To give a youthful air.

Those wrinkles mock your daily toil,
No labour will efface 'em,
You wear a mask of smoothest oil,
Yet still with ease we trace 'em.

An art so fruitless then forsake,
Which though you much excel in,
You never can contrive to make
Old Hecuba Young Helen.

ON ENVY.

PITY, says the Theban bard,
From my wishes I discard ;
Envy, let me rather be,
Rather, far, a theme for thee !
Pity to distress is shown ;
Envy to the great alone—
So the Theban—But to shine
Less conspicuous be mine !
I prefer the golden mean
Pomp and penury between,
For alarm and peril wait
Ever on the loftiest state,
And the lowest, to the end,
Obloquy and scorn attend.

BY PHILEMON.

OFT we enhance our ills by discontent,
And give them bulk, beyond what Nature meant
A parent, brother, friend deceased, to cry—
" He's dead indeed, but he was born to die "—
Such temperate grief is suited to the size
And burthen of the loss ; is just and wise.
But to exclaim—" Ah ! wherefore was I born,
Thus to be left, for ever thus forlorn ? "

Who thus laments his loss invites distress,
And magnifies a woe that might be less,
Through dull despondence to his lot resign'd,
And leaving reason's remedy behind.

EPIGRAMS.

Translated from the Latin of Owen.

ON ONE IGNORANT AND ARROGANT.

THOU mayst of double ign'rance boast,
Who know'st not that thou nothing know'st.

PRUDENT SIMPLICITY.

THAT thou mayst injure no man, dove-like be,
And serpent-like, that none may injure thee!

TO A FRIEND IN DISTRESS.

I WISH thy lot, now bad, still worse, my friend;
For when at worst, they say, things always mend.

WHEN little more than boy in age,
I deem'd myself almost a sage;
But now seem worthier to be styled,
For ignorance—almost a child.

SUNSET AND SUNRISE.

CONTEMPLATE, when the sun declines,
Thy death, with deep reflection!
And when again he rising shines,
Thy day of resurrection!

Translations from the French of Madame De La Mothe Guyon.

LOVE FAITHFUL IN THE ABSENCE OF THE BELOVED.

IN vain ye woo me to your harmless joys,
Ye pleasant bowers, remote from strife and noise;
Your shades, the witnesses of many a vow,
Breathed forth in happier days, are irksome now;
Denied that smile 'twas once my heaven to see,
Such scenes, such pleasures, are all past with me.

In vain he leaves me, I shall love him still;
And, though I mourn, not murmur at his will;
I have no cause—an object all divine
Might well grow weary of a soul like mine;
Yet pity me, great God!—forlorn, alone,
Heartless and hopeless, life and love all gone.

THE ENTIRE SURRENDER.

PEACE has unveil'd her smiling face,
And woos thy soul to her embrace,
Enjoy'd with ease, if thou refrain
From earthly love, else sought in vain;
She dwells with all who truth prefer,
But seeks not them who seek not her.

Yield to the Lord, with simple heart,
All that thou hast, and all thou art;

Renounce all strength but strength divine,
And peace shall be for ever thine :
Behold the path which I have trod,
My path, till I go home to God.

THE PERFECT SACRIFICE.

I PLACE an offering at Thy shrine.
From taint and blemish clear,
Simple and pure in its design,
Of all that I hold dear.

I yield Thee back Thy gifts again,
Thy gifts which I most prize ;
Desirous only to retain
The notice of Thine eyes.

But if, by Thine adored decree,
That blessing be denied ;
Resign'd, and unreluctant, see
My every wish subside.

Thy will in all things I approve,
Exalted or cast down :
Thy will in every state I love,
And even in Thy frown.

WATCHING UNTO GOD IN THE NIGHT SEASON.

SLEEP at last has fled these eyes,
Nor do I regret his flight,
More alert my spirits rise,
And my heart is free and light.

Nature silent all around,
Not a single witness near;
God as soon as sought is found;
And the flame of love burns clear.

Interruption, all day long,
Checks the current of my joys;
Creatures press me with a throng,
And perplex me with their noise.

Undisturb'd I muse all night,
On the first Eternal Fair;
Nothing there obstructs delight,
Love is renovated there.

Life, with its perpetual stir,
Proves a foe to love and me;
Fresh entanglements occur—
Comes the night and sets me free.

Never more, sweet sleep, suspend
My enjoyments, always new:
Leave me to possess my friend;
Other eyes and hearts subdue.

Hush the world, that I may wake
To the taste of pure delights;
Oh the pleasures I partake—
God, the partner of my nights!

David, for the selfsame cause,
Night preferr'd to busy day;
Hearts whom heavenly beauty draws,
Wish the glaring sun away.

Sleep, self-lovers, is for you—
Souls, that love celestial know,
Fairer scenes by night can view,
Than the sun could ever show.

THE JOY OF THE CROSS.

LONG plunged in sorrow, I resign
My soul to that dear hand of Thine,
Without reserve or fear;
That hand shall wipe my streaming eyes;
Or into smiles of glad surprise
Transform the falling tear.

My sole possession is Thy love;
In earth beneath, or heaven above,
I have no other store:
And though with fervent suit I pray,
And importune Thee night and day,
I ask Thee nothing more.

My rapid hours pursue the course
Prescribed them by love's sweetest force,
And I Thy sovereign will,
Without a wish to escape my doom;
Though still a sufferer from the womb,
And doomed to suffer still.

By Thy command, where'er I stray
Sorrow attends me all my way,
  A never-failing friend ;
And, if my sufferings may augment
Thy praise, behold me well content—
  Let sorrow still attend !

It cost me no regret, that she,
Who follow'd Christ, should follow me ;
  And though, where'er she goes,
Thorns spring spontaneous at her feet,
I love her, and extract a sweet
  From all my bitter woes.

Adieu ! ye vain delights of earth,
Insipid sports, and childish mirth,
  I taste no sweets in you ;
Unknown delights are in the cross,
All joy beside to me is dross ;
  And Jesus thought so too.

The cross ! Oh ravishment and bliss—
How grateful e'en its anguish is ;
  Its bitterness how sweet !
There every sense, and all the mind,
In all her faculties refined,
  Tastes happiness complete.

Souls, once enabled to disdain
Base sublunary joys, maintain
  Their dignity secure ;
The fever of desire is pass'd,
And love has all its genuine taste,
  Is delicate and pure.

Self-love no grace in sorrow sees,
Consults her own peculiar ease;
'Tis all the bliss she knows;
But nobler aims true Love employ;
In self-denial is her joy,
In suffering her repose.

Sorrow and Love go side by side;
Nor height nor depth can e'er divide
Their heaven-appointed bands;
Those dear associates still are one,
Nor till the race of life is run
Disjoin their wedded hands.

Jesus, avenger of our fall,
Thou faithful lover, above all
The cross has ever borne!
Oh, tell me—life is in Thy voice—
How much afflictions were Thy choice,
And sloth and ease Thy scorn!

Thy choice and mine shall be the same,
Inspirer of that holy flame,
Which must for ever blaze!
To take the cross and follow Thee,
Where love and duty lead, shall be
My portion and my praise.

SIMPLE TRUST.

STILL, still, without ceasing,
I feel it increasing,
This fervour of holy desire;
And often exclaim,
Let me die in the flame
Of a love that can never expire!

Had I words to explain
What she must sustain
Who dies to the world and its ways;
How joy and affright,
Distress and delight,
Alternately chequer her days:

Thou, sweetly severe!
I would make Thee appear,
In all Thou art pleased to award,
Not more in the sweet
Than the bitter I meet,
My tender and merciful Lord.

This faith, in the dark,
Pursuing its mark,
Through many sharp trials of love,
Is the sorrowful waste
That is to be pass'd
In the way to the Canaan above.

LOVE INCREASED BY SUFFERING.

"I LOVE the Lord," is still the strain
This heart delights to sing;
But I reply—your thoughts are vain,
Perhaps 'tis no such thing.

Before the power of love divine
Creation fades away;
Till only God is seen to shine
In all that we survey.

In gulfs of awful night we find
The God of our desires ;
'Tis there he stamps the yielding mind,
And doubles all its fires.

Flames of encircling love invest,
And pierce it sweetly through ;
'Tis fill'd with sacred joy, yet press'd
With sacred sorrow too.

Ah, love ! my heart is in the right—
Amidst a thousand woes,
To thee its ever new delight,
And all its peace, it owes.

Fresh causes of distress occur
Where'er I look or move ;
The comforts I to all prefer
Are solitude and love.

Nor exile I nor prison fear ;
Love makes my courage great ;
I find a Saviour everywhere,
His grace in every state.

Nor castle walls, nor dungeons deep,
Exclude his quickening beams ;
There I can sit, and sing, and weep,
And dwell on heavenly themes.

There sorrow, for his sake, is found
A joy beyond compare ;
There no presumptuous thoughts abound,
Nor pride can enter there.

A Saviour doubles all my joys,
And sweetens all my pains,
His strength in my defence employs,
Consoles me and sustains.

I fear no ill, resent no wrong;
Nor feel a passion move,
When malice whets her slanderous tongue;
Such patience is in love.

THE SWALLOW.

I AM fond of the swallow—I learn from her flight,
Had I skill to improve it, a lesson of love:
How seldom on earth do we see her alight!
She dwells in the skies, she is ever above.

It is on the wing that she takes her repose,
Suspended and poised in the regions of air,
'Tis not in our fields that her sustenance grows,
It is wing'd like herself, 'tis ethereal fare.

She comes in the spring, all the summer she stays,
And dreading the cold still follows the sun—
So, true to our love we should covet his rays,
And the place where he shines not immediately shun.

Our light should be love, and our nourishment prayer;
It is dangerous food that we find upon earth;
The fruit of this world is beset with a snare,
In itself it is hurtful, as vile as its birth.

'Tis rarely if ever she settles below,
And only when building a nest for her young;
Were it not for her brood she would never bestow
A thought upon anything filthy as dung.

Let us leave it ourselves ('tis a mortal abode),
To bask every moment in infinite love;
Let us fly the dark winter, and follow the road
That leads to the dayspring appearing above.

A CHILD OF GOD LONGING TO SEE HIM BELOVED.

THERE'S not an echo round me,
But I am glad should learn,
How pure a fire has found me—
The love with which I burn.
For none attends with pleasure
To what I would reveal;
They slight me out of measure,
And laugh at what I feel.

The rocks receive less proudly
The story of my flame;
When I approach, they loudly
Reverberate His name.
I speak to them of sadness,
And comforts at a stand;
They bid me look for gladness,
And better days at hand.

Far from all habitation,
I hear a happy sound;
Big with the consolation
That I have often found.

I said, "My lot is sorrow,
My grief has no alloy;"
The rocks replied—"To-morrow,
To-morrow brings thee joy."

These sweet and sacred tidings,
What bliss it is to hear!
For, spite of all my chidings,
My weakness and my fear,
No sooner I receive them,
Than I forget my pain,
And, happy to believe them,
I love as much again.

I fly to scenes romantic,
Where never men resort;
For in an age so frantic
Impiety is sport.
For riot and confusion
They barter things above,
Condemning, as delusion,
The joy of perfect love.

In this sequester'd corner,
None hears what I express;
Deliver'd from the scorner,
What peace do I possess!
Beneath the boughs reclining,
Or roving o'er the wild,
I live as undesigning
And harmless as a child.

No troubles here surprise me,
I innocently play,
While Providence supplies me,
And guards me all the day;

My dear and kind Defender
  Preserves me safely here,
From men of pomp and splendour,
  Who fill a child with fear.

ASPIRATIONS OF THE SOUL AFTER GOD.

MY Spouse! in whose presence I live,
  Sole object of all my desires,
Who know'st what a flame I conceive,
  And canst easily double its fires!
How pleasant is all that I meet!
  From fear of adversity free,
I find even sorrow made sweet;
  Because 'tis assign'd me by Thee.

Transported, I see Thee display
  Thy riches and glory divine:
I have only my life to repay;
  Take what I would gladly resign
Thy will is the treasure I seek,
  For Thou art as faithful as strong;
There let me, obedient and meek,
  Repose myself all the day long.

My spirit and faculties fail;
  Oh finish what love has begun!
Destroy what is sinful and frail,
  And dwell in the soul thou hast won!
Dear theme of my wonder and praise,
  I cry, who is worthy as Thou!
I can only be silent and gaze!
  'Tis all that is left to me now.

Oh glory in which I am lost,
Too deep for the plummet of thought ;
On an ocean of Deity toss'd,
I am swallow'd, I sink into nought.
Yet, lost and obsorb'd as I seem,
I chant to the praise of my King ;
And though overwhelm'd by the theme,
Am happy whenever I sing.

GRATITUDE AND LOVE TO GOD.

ALL are indebted much to thee,
But I far more than all,
From many a deadly snare set free,
And raised from many a fall :
Overwhelm me, from above,
Daily with thy boundless love.

What bounds of gratitude I feel
No language can declare ;
Beneath the oppressive weight I reel,
'Tis more than I can bear :
When shall I that blessing prove,
To return thee love for love ?

Spirit of charity, dispense
Thy grace to every heart ;
Expel all other spirits thence,
Drive self from every part ;
Charity divine, draw nigh,
Break the chains in which we lie !

All selfish souls, whate'er they feign,
Have still a slavish lot;
They boast of liberty in vain,
Of love, and feel it not:
He whose bosom glows with Thee,
He, and he alone is free.

O blessedness, all bliss above,
When Thy pure fires prevail!
Love only teaches what is love;
All other lessons fail:
We learn its name, but not its powers;
Experience only makes it ours.

LIVING WATER.

THE fountain in its source
No drought of summer fears;
The farther it pursues its course,
The nobler it appears.

But shallow cisterns yield
A scanty short supply;
The morning sees them amply fill'd,
At evening they are dry.

DIVINE JUSTICE AMIABLE.

THOU hast no lightnings, O thou Just!
Or I their force should know;
And if Thou strike me into dust,
My soul approves the blow.

The heart, that values less its ease
  Than it adores thy ways,
In thine avenging anger sees
  A subject of its praise.

Pleased I could lie, conceal'd and lost,
  In shades of central night ;
Not to avoid Thy wrath, Thou know'st,
  But lest I grieve Thy sight.

Smite me, O Thou, whom I provoke !
  And I will love Thee still :
The well deserved and righteous stroke
  Shall please me, though it kill.

Am I not worthy to sustain
  The worst Thou canst devise ?
And dare I seek Thy throne again,
  And meet Thy sacred eyes ?

Far from afflicting, Thou art kind ;
  And, in my saddest hours,
An unction of Thy grace I find,
  Pervading all my powers.

Alas ! Thou spar'st me yet again ;
  And, when Thy wrath should move,
Too gentle to endure my pain,
  Thou sooth'st me with Thy love.

I have no punishment to fear ;
  But, ah ! that smile from Thee
Imparts a pang far more severe
  Than woe itself would be.

THE SOUL THAT LOVES GOD FINDS HIM EVERYWHERE.

OH Thou, by long experience tried,
Near whom no grief can long abide,
My love! how full of sweet content
I pass my years of banishment!

All scenes alike engaging prove
To souls impress'd with sacred love!
Where'er they dwell, they dwell in Thee;
In heaven, in earth, or on the sea.

To me remains nor place nor time;
My country is in every clime;
I can be calm and free from care
On any shore, since God is there.

While place we seek, or place we shun,
The soul finds happiness in none;
But, with a God to guide our way,
'Tis equal joy to go or stay.

Could I be cast where Thou art not,
That were indeed a dreadful lot;
But regions none remote I call,
Secure in finding God in all.

My country, Lord, art Thou alone;
Nor other can I claim or own;
The point were all my wishes meet;
My law, my love, life's only sweet!

I hold by nothing here below;
Appoint my journey, and I go:

Though pierc'd by scorn, oppress'd by pride,
I feel Thee good—feel nought beside.

No frowns of men can hurtful prove
To souls on fire with heavenly love;
Though men and devils both condemn,
No gloomy days arise from them.

Ah then! to His embrace repair;
My soul, thou art no stranger there;
There love divine shall be thy guard,
And peace and safety thy reward.

DIVINE LOVE ENDURES NO RIVAL.

LOVE is the Lord whom I obey,
Whose will transported I perform;
The centre of my rest, my stay,
Love's all in all to me, myself a worm.

For uncreated charms I burn,
Oppress'd by slavish fear no more;
For one in whom I may discern,
E'en when He frowns, a sweetness I adore.

He little loves him who complains,
And finds Him rigorous and severe;
His heart is sordid, and he feigns,
Though loud in boasting of a soul sincere.

Love causes grief, but 'tis to move
And stimulate the slumbering mind;
And he has never tasted love,
Who shuns a pang so graciously design'd.

Sweet is the cross, above all sweets,
To souls enamoured with thy smiles;
The keenest woe life ever meets,
Love strips of all its terrors, and beguiles.

'Tis just that God should not be dear
Where self engrosses all the thought,
And groans and murmurs make it clear,
Whatever else is loved, the Lord is not

The love of Thee flows just as much
As that of ebbing self subsides;
Our hearts, their scantiness is such,
Bear not the conflict of two rival tides.

Both cannot govern in one soul:
Then let self-love be dispossess'd;
The love of God deserves the whole,
And will not dwell with so despised a guest.

REPOSE IN GOD.

BLEST! who, far from all mankind,
This world's shadows left behind,
Hears from heaven a gentle strain
Whispering love, and loves again.

Blest! who free from self-esteem,
Dives into the Great Supreme,
All desire besides discards,
Joys inferior none regards.

Blest! who in Thy bosom seeks
Rest that nothing earthly breaks,

Dead to self and worldly things,
Lost in Thee, Thou King of kings!

Ye that know my secret fire,
Softly speak and soon retire:
Favour my divine repose,
Spare the sleep a God bestows.

GLORY TO GOD ALONE.

OH loved! but not enough—though dearer far
Than self and its most loved enjoyments are;
None duly love Thee, but who, nobly free
From sensual objects, finds his all in Thee.

Glory to God! thou stranger here below,
Whom man nor knows, nor feels a wish to know;
Our faith and reason are both shock'd to find
Man in the post of honour—Thee behind.

Reason exclaims—"Let every creature fall,
Ashamed, abased, before the Lord of all;"
And Faith, o'erwhelm'd with such a dazzling blaze,
Feebly describes the beauty she surveys.

Yet man, dim-sighted man, and rash as blind,
Deaf to the dictates of his better mind,
In frantic competition dares the skies,
And claims precedence of the Only Wise.

Oh lost in vanity, till once self-known!
Nothing is great, or good, but God alone;
When thou shalt stand before His awful face,
Then, at the last, thy pride shall know His place.

Glory, Almighty, First, and without end!
When wilt Thou melt the mountains and descend!
When wilt Thou shoot abroad Thy conquering rays,
And teach these atoms Thou hast made, Thy praise?

Thy glory is the sweetest heaven I feel;
And if I seek it with too fierce a zeal,
Thy love, triumphant o'er a selfish will,
Taught me the passion, and inspires it still.

My reason, all my faculties, unite,
To make Thy glory their supreme delight;
Forbid it, fountain of my brightest days,
That I should rob Thee, and usurp Thy praise!

My soul! rest happy in thy low estate,
Nor hope, nor wish, to be esteem'd or great;
To take the impression of a will divine,
Be that thy glory, and those riches thine.

Confess Him righteous in his just decrees,
Love what He loves, and let His pleasures please;
Die daily; from the touch of sin recede;
Then thou hast crowned Him, and He reigns indeed.

Translations from Virgil.

OVID. TRIST. LIB. V. ELEG. XII.

"Scribis, ut oblectum."

YOU bid me write t' amuse the tedious hours,
And save from with'ring my poetic pow'rs.
Hard is the task, my friend, for verse should flow
From the free mind, not fettered down by woe;
Restless amidst unceasing tempests tost,
Whoe'er has cause for sorrow, I have most.
Would you bid Priam laugh, his sons all slain,
Or childless Niobe from tears refrain,
Join the gay dance, and lead the festive train?
Does grief or study most befit the mind,
To this remote, this barb'rous nook confin'd?
Could you impart to my unshaken breast
The fortitude by Socrates possess'd
Soon would it sink beneath such woes as mine,
For what is human strength to wrath divine?
Wise as he was, and heaven pronounced him so,
My suff'rings would have laid that wisdom low.
Could I forget my country, thee and all,
And even th' offence to which I owe my fall,
Yet fear alone would freeze the poet's vein,
While hostile troops swarm o'er the dreary plain.
Add that the fatal rust of long disuse
Unfits me for the service of the Muse.
Thistles and weeds are all we can expect
From the best soil impov'rish'd by neglect;
Unexercis'd and to his stall confined,
The fleetest racer would be left behind;

The best built bark that cleaves the wat'ry way,
Laid useless by, would moulder and decay—
No hope remains that time shall me restore,
Mean as I was, to what I was before.
Think how a series of desponding cares
Benumbs the genius and its force impairs.
How oft, as now, on this devoted sheet,
My verse constrain'd to move with measur'd feet,
Reluctant and laborious limps along,
And proves itself a wretched exile's song.
What is it tunes the most melodious lays?
'Tis emulation and the thirst of praise,
A noble thirst, and not unknown to me,
While smoothly wafted on a calmer sea.
But can a wretch like Ovid pant for fame?
No, rather let the world forget my name.
Is it because that world approv'd my strain,
You prompt me to the same pursuit again?
No, let the Nine th' ungrateful truth excuse,
I charge my hopeless ruin on the Muse,
And, like Perillus, meet my just desert,
The victim of my own pernicious art.
Fool that I was to be so warn'd in vain,
And shipwreck'd once to tempt the deep again.
Ill fares the bard in this unletter'd land,
None to consult and none to understand.
The purest verse has no admirers here,
Their own rude language only suits their ear.
Rude as it is, at length familiar grown,
I learn it, and almost unlearn my own—
Yet to say truth, ev'n here the Muse disdains
Confinement, and attempts her former strains,
But finds the strong desire is not the pow'r,
And what her taste condemns, the flames devour.
A part, perhaps, like this, escapes the doom,

And though unworthy, finds a friend at Rome ;
But oh, the cruel art, that could undo
It's vot'ry thus, would that could perish too !

HOR. LIB. I. ODE IX.

" Vides, ut altâ stet nive candidum
Soracte."

SEEST thou yon mountain laden with deep snow,
The groves beneath their fleecy burthen bow,
The streams congeal'd forget to flow ;
Come, thaw the cold, and lay a cheerful pile
Of fuel on the hearth ;
Broach the best cask, and make old winter smile
With seasonable mirth.

This be our part—let Heaven dispose the rest ;
If Jove command, the winds shall sleep,
That now wage war upon the foamy deep,
And gentle gales spring from the balmy West.
E'en let us shift to-morrow as we may,
When to-morrow's past away,
We at least shall have to say,
We have lived another day ;
Your auburn locks will soon be silver'd o'er,
Old age is at our heels, and youth returns no more.

HOR. LIB. I. ODE XXXVIII.

"Persicos odi, puer, apparatus"

BOY, I hate their empty shows,
Persian garlands I detest;
Bring not me the late-blown rose
Ling'ring after all the rest:

Plainer myrtle pleases me
Thus outstretched beneath my vine;
Myrtle more becoming thee,
Waiting with thy master's wine.

HOR. LIB. II. ODE XVI.

"Otium Divos rogat in patenti."

EASE is the weary merchant's pray'r,
Who ploughs beneath th' Ægean flood,
When neither moon nor stars appear,
Or faintly glimmer through the cloud.

For ease the Mede with quiver graced,
For ease the Thracian hero sighs;
Delightful ease all pant to taste,
A blessing which no treasure buys.

For neither gold can lull to rest,
Nor all a Consul's guard beat off
The tumults of a troubled breast,
The cares that haunt a gilded roof.

Happy the man, whose table shows
A few clean ounces of old plate,
No fear intrudes on his repose,
No sordid wishes to be great.

Poor short-lived things, what plans we lay!
Ah, why forsake our native home!
To distant climates speed away;
For self sticks close where'er we roam.

Care follows hard; and soon o'ertakes
The well-rigg'd ship, the warlike steed,
Her destined quarry ne'er forsakes,
Not the wind flies with half her speed.

From anxious fears of future ill
Guard well the cheerful, happy now;
Gild e'en your sorrows with a smile,
No blessing is unmix'd below.

Thy neighing steeds and lowing herds,
Thy num'rous flocks around thee graze,
And the best purple Tyre affords
Thy robe magnificent displays.

On me indulgent Heav'n bestow'd
A rural mansion, neat and small;
This Lyre—and as for yonder crowd,
The happiness to hate them all.

OLNEY HYMNS.

WELCOME, CROSS!

'TIS my happiness below
Not to live without the Cross,
But the Saviour's power to know
Sanctifying every loss:
Trials must and will befall;
But with humble faith to see
Love inscribed upon them all—
This is happiness to me.

God in Israel sows the seeds
Of affliction, pain, and toil;
These spring up and choke the weeds
Which would else o'erspread the soil:
Trials make the promise sweet,
Trials give new life to prayer,
Trials bring me to His feet,
Lay me low, and keep me there.

Did I meet no trials here,
No chastisement by the way,
Might I not with reason fear
I should prove a castaway?

Bastards may escape the rod,
  Sunk in earthly vain delight;
But the true-born child of God
  Must not—would not, if he might.

LIGHT SHINING OUT OF DARKNESS.

GOD moves in a mysterious way
  His wonders to perform;
He plants His footsteps in the sea,
  And rides upon the storm.

Deep in unfathomable mines
  Of never-failing skill,
He treasures up His bright designs,
  And works His sovereign will.

Ye fearful saints, fresh courage take
  The clouds ye so much dread
Are big with mercy, and shall break
  In blessings on your head.

Judge not the Lord by feeble sense,
  But trust Him for His grace;
Behind a frowning providence
  He hides a smiling face.

His purposes will ripen fast,
  Unfolding every hour;
The bud may have a bitter taste,
  But sweet will be the flower.

Blind unbelief is sure to err,
And scan His work in vain:
God is His own Interpreter,
And He will make it plain.

WALKING WITH GOD. *Gen.* v. 24.

OH! for a closer walk with God,
A calm and heavenly frame;
A light to shine upon the road
That leads me to the Lamb!

Where is the blessedness I knew
When first I saw the Lord?
Where is the soul-refreshing view
Of Jesus and His word?

What peaceful hours I once enjoyed!
How sweet their memory still!
But they have left an aching void
The world can never fill.

Return, O holy Dove, return!
Sweet messenger of rest!
I hate the sins that made Thee mourn,
And drove Thee from my breast.

The dearest idol I have known,
Whate'er that idol be,
Help me to tear it from Thy throne,
And worship only Thee.

So shall my walk be close with God,
Calm and serene my frame;
So purer light shall mark the road
That leads me to the Lamb.

WISDOM. *Prov.* viii. 22-31.

"ERE God had built the mountains,
Or raised the fruitful hills;
Before He fill'd the fountains
That feed the running rills;
In me from everlasting,
The wonderful I AM
Found pleasures never wasting,
And Wisdom is my name.

"When, like a tent to dwell in,
He spread the skies abroad,
And swathed about the swelling
Of Ocean's mighty flood;
He wrought by weight and measure,
And I was with Him then:
Myself the Father's pleasure,
And mine, the sons of men."

Thus Wisdom's words discover
Thy glory and Thy grace,
Thou everlasting lover
Of our unworthy race!
Thy gracious eye surveyed us,
Ere stars were seen above;
In wisdom thou hast made us,
And died for us in love.

And could'st Thou be delighted
With creatures such as we,
Who, when we saw Thee, slighted,
And nailed Thee to a tree?
Unfathomable wonder,
And mystery divine!
The voice that speaks in thunder,
Says, "Sinner, I am thine!"

O LORD, I WILL PRAISE THEE. *Isaiah* xii. 1.

I WILL praise Thee every day,
Now Thine anger's turn'd away;
Comfortable thoughts arise
From the bleeding sacrifice.

Here in the fair gospel-field,
Wells of free salvation yield
Streams of life, a plenteous store,
And my soul shall thirst no more.

Jesus is become at length
My salvation and my strength;
And His praises shall prolong,
While I live, my pleasant song.

Praise ye, then, His glorious name,
Publish His exalted fame!
Still His worth your praise exceeds;
Excellent are all His deeds.

Raise again the joyful sound,
Let the nations roll it round!
Zion, shout! for this is He;
God, the Saviour dwells in Thee.

SARDIS. *Rev.* iii. 1-6.

"WRITE to Sardis," saith the Lord,
"And write what He declares,
He whose spirit, and whose word,
Upholds the seven stars:
All thy works and ways I search,
Find thy zeal and love decay'd;
Thou art call'd a living church,
But thou art cold and dead.

"Watch, remember, seek and strive,
Exert thy former pains;
Let thy timely care revive,
And strengthen what remains;
Cleanse thine heart, thy works amend,
Former times to mind recall,
Lest my sudden stroke descend,
And smite thee once for all.

"Yet I number now in thee
A few that are upright;
These my Father's face shall see,
And walk with me in white.
When in judgment I appear,
They for mine shall be confessed;
Let my faithful servants hear—
And woe be to the rest!"

PRAYER FOR CHILDREN.

GRACIOUS Lord, our children see,
By Thy mercy we are free;
But shall these, alas! remain
Subjects still of Satan's reign?
Israel's young ones, when of old
Pharaoh threaten'd to withhold,
Then Thy messenger said, "No;
Let the children also go!"

When the angel of the Lord,
Drawing forth his dreadful sword,
Slew with an avenging hand
All the first-born of the land;
Then Thy people's doors he pass'd
Where the bloody sign was placed:
Hear us now upon our knees
Plead the blood of Christ for these!

Lord, we tremble, for we know
How the fierce, malicious foe,
Wheeling round his watchful flight,
Keeps them ever in his sight:
Spread Thy pinions, King of kings!
Hide them safe beneath Thy wings;
Lest the ravenous bird of prey
Stoop and bear the brood away.

EXHORTATION TO PRAYER.

WHAT various hindrances we meet
In coming to a mercy-seat!
Yet who that knows the worth of prayer,
But wishes to be often there?

Prayer makes the darkened cloud withdraw,
Prayer climbs the ladder Jacob saw,
Gives exercise to faith and love,
Brings every blessing from above.

Restraining prayer, we cease to fight ;
Prayer makes the Christian's armour bright ;
And Satan trembles when he sees
The weakest saint upon his knees.

While Moses stood with arms spread wide,
Success was found on Israel's side ;
But when through weariness they fail'd,
That moment Amalek prevail'd.

Have you no words ? Ah, think again,
Words flow apace when you complain,
And fill your fellow-creatures' ear
With the sad tale of all your care !

Were half the breath thus vainly spent
To Heaven in supplication sent,
Your cheerful song would oftener be,
"Hear what the Lord has done for me."

I AM THE LORD THAT HEALETH THEE.

Exod. xv. 26.

HEAL us, Emmanuel ! here we are,
Waiting to feel Thy touch :
Deep-wounded souls to Thee repair,
And, Saviour, we are such.

Our faith is feeble, we confess,
  We faintly trust Thy word;
But wilt Thou pity us the less?
  Be that far from Thee, Lord!

Remember him who once applied,
  With trembling, for relief;
"Lord, I believe," with tears, he cried,
  "Oh, help my unbelief!"

She too, who touch'd Thee in the press,
  And healing virtue stole,
Was answer'd, "Daughter, go in peace,
  Thy faith hath made thee whole."

Conceal'd amid the gathering throng,
  She would have shunn'd Thy view;
And if her faith was firm and strong,
  Had strong misgivings too.

JEHOVAH OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS. *Jer.* xxiii. 6.

MY God, how perfect are Thy ways!
  But mine polluted are;
Sin twines itself about my praise,
  And slides into my prayer.

When I would speak what Thou hast done
  To save me from my sin,
I cannot make Thy mercies known,
  But self-applause creeps in.

Divine desire, that holy flame
  Thy grace creates in me;
Alas! impatience is its name,
  When it returns to Thee.

This heart, a fountain of vile thoughts,
How does it overflow,
While self upon the surface floats,
Still bubbling from below.

Let others in the gaudy dress
Of fancied merit shine;
The Lord shall be my righteousness,
The Lord for ever mine.

PRAISE FOR THE FOUNTAIN OPENED.

Zech. xiii. 1.

THERE is a fountain fill'd with blood,
Drawn from Emmanuel's veins;
And sinners plunged beneath that flood
Lose all their guilty stains.

The dying thief rejoiced to see
That fountain in his day;
And there have I, as well as he,
Wash'd all my sins away.

Dear dying Lamb, Thy precious blood
Shall never lose its power,
Till all the ransom'd church of God
Be saved, to sin no more.

E'er since by faith I saw the stream
Thy flowing wounds supply,
Redeeming love has been my theme,
And shall be till I die.

Then in a nobler, sweeter song,
I'll sing Thy power to save;
When this poor lisping, stammering tongue
Lies silent in the grave.

Lord, I believe Thou hast prepared
(Unworthy though I be)
For me a blood-bought free reward,
A golden harp for me!

'Tis strung and tuned for endless years,
And form'd by power divine,
To sound in God the Father's ears
No other name but Thine.

LOVEST THOU ME? *John* xv. 16.

HARK, my soul! it is the Lord;
'Tis the Saviour, hear His word;
Jesus speaks, and speaks to thee,
"Say, poor sinner, lov'st thou Me?

"I deliver'd thee when bound,
And when bleeding heal'd thy wound;
Sought thee wandering, set thee right,
Turn'd thy darkness into light.

"Can a woman's tender care
Cease towards the child she bare?
Yes, she may forgetful be,
Yet will I remember Thee.

"Mine is an unchanging love,
Higher than the heights above,
Deeper than the depths beneath,
Free and faithful, strong as death.

"Thou shalt see My glory soon,
When the work of grace is done;
Partner of My throne shalt be:—
Say, poor sinner, lov'st thou Me?"

Lord, it is my chief complaint,
That my love is weak and faint;
Yet I love Thee, and adore—
Oh! for grace to love Thee more!

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